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ABSTRACT

This document describes the vocational education and training system in Belgium, beginning in chapter 1 with the administrative, demographic, and economic background in which the training system exists. Chapter 2 provides a brief historical review of the development of the training system; arrangements for initial training; and arrangements for continuing training, teacher training, and adult training. Chapter 3 indicates where responsibilities for administering the system are located, including the influence of the social partners, and presents information on the financing system. Chapter 4 provides an indication of present trends and developments, including how far the system has been, or would be, influenced by European Community considerations, such as the following: creation of the single European market, mutual recognition of qualifications, the intervention of the Structural Funds, and the Community's education and training programs. Specific topics are as follows: divergent training systems, the teaching profession and teacher training, choice of study by girls, and education in the Flemish and French communities. Appendixes contain 14 references and the following: list of acronyms and abbreviated titles; major organizations involved in providing or regulating vocational training; and glossary. (YLB)

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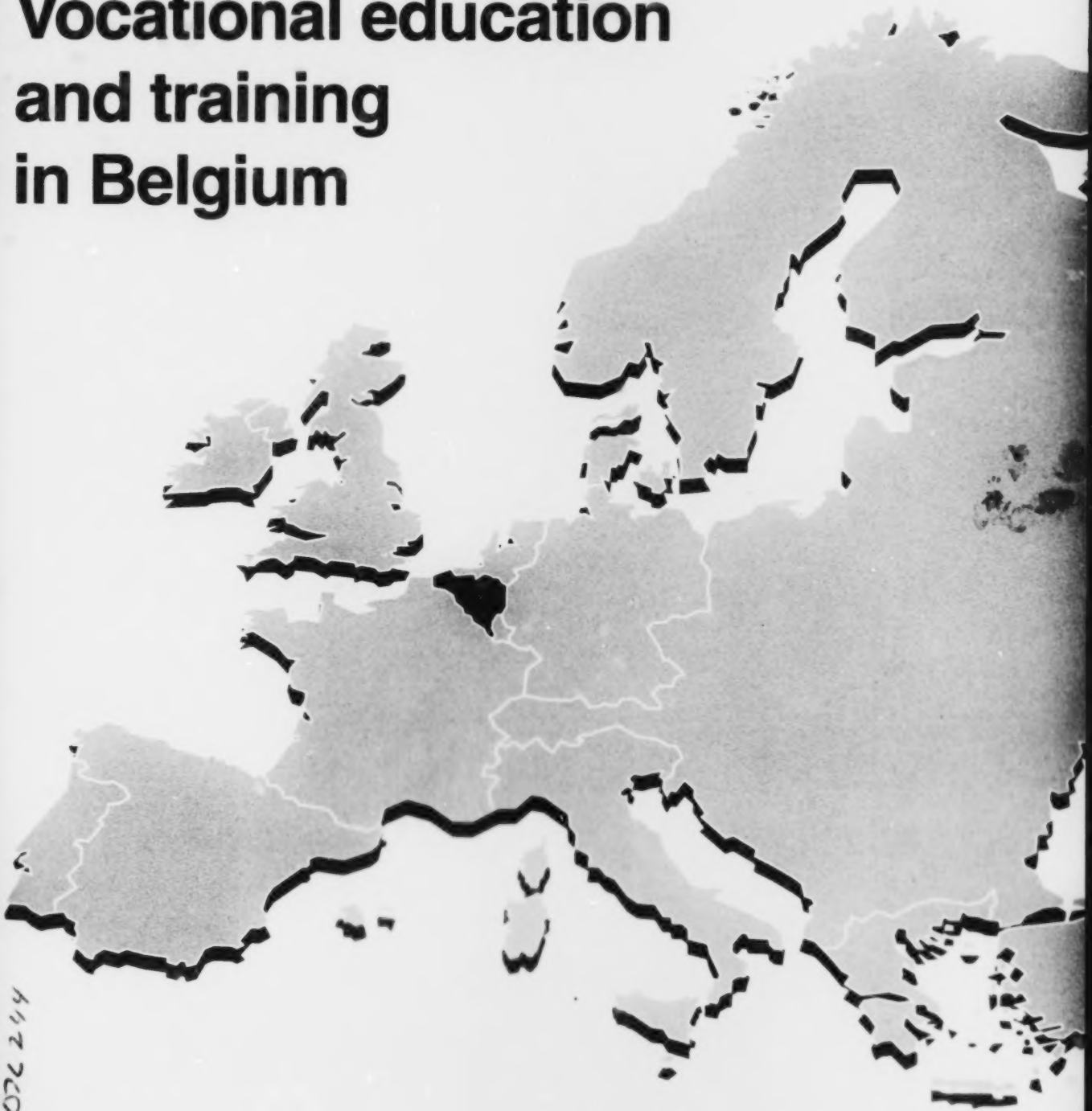

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CEDEFOP

Vocational education and training in Belgium

This monograph has been prepared by

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en Beroepsopleiding (VDAB)

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CEDEFOP INTRODUCTION

IS THERE A SYSTEM?

Is there such a thing as a vocational training system? Strictly speaking, the answer is 'no', in that a system assumes a clear set of objectives and a logical and coherent framework for policy-making and execution to achieve them. In reality, vocational training, sandwiched between the education system and the demands of the labour-market, and caught between the different and varying social, economic, and political priorities of political parties and the social partners, and in the conflicts between different ministries and public powers, located at national, regional, and local level, does not demonstrate the characteristics of a system in any of the Community Member States.

Nevertheless, this volume and the 11 similar volumes on the other Member States constitute a third generation of CEDEFOP monographs on the training systems in the Member States. In preparing it, much has been learnt from the procedures used for, and the reaction to, the earlier monographs and the Guide to the vocational training systems, published in 1983.

CONTENT OF THE REPORTS

The present monographs have been prepared by one organization or individual in each of the Member States, following a detailed specification by CEDEFOP of the contents required. These specifications were discussed and agreed at a meeting in Berlin in May 1991.

The basic structure was designed to incorporate:

(a) a presentation of the administrative, demographic, and economic background in which the training system exists;

(b) a brief historical review of the development of the training systems;

(c) a presentation of the arrangements for initial training;

(d) a presentation of the arrangements for continuing training;

(e) an indication of where responsibilities for administering the system are located, including the influence of the social partners;

(f) information on the financing system;

(g) an indication of present trends and developments, where authors were asked, in particular, to indicate how far the system has been, or would be, influenced by Community considerations such as the creation of the single European market, mutual recognition of qualifications, the intervention of the Structural Funds, and the Community's education and training programmes.

THE PROCESS OF PREPARATION

Authors were asked to send a copy of their draft report for comment to the members of CEDEFOP's management board in their country, and organizations with a major role in the training system. They were requested to incorporate the views expressed to the maximum extent possible. Whereas, in general, authors were asked to be descriptive and analytical, they were encouraged in the last section (g above) to express their own views.

Initial draft monographs on each of the Member States were delivered to CEDEFOP in the period between September 1991 and March 1992. As experience had led us to expect, the documents received varied considerably in their approach, content, and presentation. Between January and October 1992, CEDEFOP had a series of intensive meetings with each of the authors, in order to ensure that certain elements were added to the reports and that they respected specific rules with relation to presentation. A novel and very beneficial feature of these meetings was participation in many cases by the translators responsible for translating the volume concerned.

Following these meetings, the authors revised their report on the basis of what was said during the meetings, took account of comments received, and included references to recent developments in their country.

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USE OF DIAGRAMS

It had been hoped that a large number of diagrams could be developed which would be common to all the monographs, and could then be used to simplify comparisons between the Member States by the reader. These could later become the basis of additional publications, such as a guide to the training systems or particular aspects of them. However, we have found that, while it is relatively easy to obtain and present statistical information on the population, the employment market, and the economy, it remains difficult not only to obtain hard and comparable data on many aspects of the education and training systems of all 12 Member States, but also to present this information in a useful diagrammatic form.

WHO ARE THE USERS?

A question which came up repeatedly in the preparation of the monographs was: what is our primary user group? Our belief is that these monographs will be useful to a wide range of people active in vocational training, including policy-makers, practitioners, and researchers, and also to those seeking training in another country and needing to know the framework in which it is provided. They are therefore particularly geared towards the needs of those who participate, or wish to participate, in any of the Community programmes involving partnerships, visits, etc. Hence the emphasis on having monographs which are not more than 100 pages in length, and which do not require reference to other documents.

LINKS WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

CEDEFOP has been anxious that this work should be seen in the context of other Community activities with relation to information on the education and training systems. CEDEFOP has been glad to participate in the joint publication with Eurydice of *Structures of the education and initial training systems in the Member States of the European Community* which is available in English, French and German. The European Units of Eurydice, and CEDEFOP have also tried to ensure that the authors of the monographs on the training systems, and the Eurydice units providing information for the national dossiers on the education systems, should be in contact with each other. Similarly, the European Units of Eurydice, and CEDEFOP are continuing their efforts to ensure that the products of this work be available to a wide audience, and with this in mind are investigating possibilities of holding the information on a common automated system.

In a more general way, as indicated above, CEDEFOP considers these monographs should be useful in supporting other activities of the Community in the field of training, and through this the implementation of the new provisions, contained in Articles 126 and 127 of the EC Treaty as introduced by the Maastricht Treaty.

The publication of these monographs does not mark the end of this activity. Arrangements will be made for their updating and their re-publication as appropriate and as resources permit. CEDEFOP would be extremely pleased to have comments on their usefulness and proposals on how they could be improved from anybody who has occasion to use them.

Corrado Politi
Deputy Director

J. Michael Adams

F. Alan Clarke

Berlin, November 1992

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The first version of this CEDEFOP monograph on vocational training in Belgium was drawn up in August 1991. Copies were sent to numerous institutions in Belgium, that is education and training institutions, research institutions, the social partners, the Ministry of Employment and Labour and the Belgian members of CEDEFOP's management board, with a note requesting their criticism and observations on the accuracy of the data and of the emphasis. We had predominantly positive feedback from about a quarter of them and, where necessary, the suggested improvements were made. In March 1992, the result was perused with CEDEFOP, which suggested making clarifications here and there for the benefit of non-Belgian readers. It was suggested that other parts would come over better if their presentation was altered. In addition, a number of data — chiefly figures — needed updating. The most recent data for the final version therefore date from June 1992.

As far as source material is concerned, 60 different documents were consulted. The most important of these are listed in the appended bibliography. In addition, during the drafting of the first version, various institutions provided recent, often not yet officially published, data. In discussions with the author of the two previous editions of the monograph, it was decided to retain his section on the birth and development of vocational training. Naturally, developments since the 1980s have been revised.

As a result of improved structural collaboration between CEDEFOP and Eurydice, I took the initiative in spring 1991 of calling a meeting with the two Belgian Eurydice units at which interesting informative material was exchanged, in particular with an eye to the Eurydice files on the education system.

The collaboration held with the translators in December 1992 at Icodoc/CIDOC appeared useful for the French version of this monograph with a view to leaving nothing to chance with regard to the correct terminology reflecting the specific realities of the Belgian situation.

From the very onset, CEDEFOP was insistent on effecting a coherent description of the Belgian training system. Insiders are aware that this has become a delicate matter in a country where education and training fall within the jurisdiction of the communities. In this connection, the reader will come across the suggestion put forward in Chapter 4 together with an argument for an instrument for the uniform compilation of statistics on vocational training, *inter alia*, for comparative purposes.

Finally, I would thank all the institutions and individuals who have contributed towards the final result, the responsibility for the content of which lies with me.

Frederik Geers
VDAB
Brussels, December 1992

Belgium

German-speaking community / Wallonia
French-speaking community / Wallonia
Flemish community / Flanders
Brussels (capital) region

Subregions for employment services of FOREM and VDAB (see Chapter 2.4 FOREM/VDAB)

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1.1. Political and administrative structures

The Kingdom of Belgium

1.1.1
The Kingdom of Belgium is divided into three regions: Flanders, Wallonia and the capital city, Brussels. As a result of the most recent amendment of the Constitution by virtue of the special Law of 1988, those three regions have had additional political, economic and social powers devolved to them.[1]

1.1.2
In addition, the Belgians divide into three linguistic communities: the Flemish community (comprising the inhabitants of the Flemish region and some of the inhabitants of the Brussels region), the French community (inhabitants of the Walloon region and some of the inhabitants of the Brussels region) and the German-speaking community.

1.1.3
By the same token, those linguistic communities have, by virtue of the special Law of 1988, independent powers in the political, social and cultural spheres. As far as the cultural sphere is concerned, the communities have been given real power over the whole of education, ranging from nursery education to high school (hogeschool)* and adult education including the psychological, medical and social (PMS) centres.

1.1.4
Only three areas of education still remain within the jurisdiction of the national authorities.

These are as follows:

(i) determining when compulsory education should start and end;

(ii) the minimum requirements for the award of diplomas; in other words, the broad classification of education into levels; and

(iii) the pension scheme, because, following the 1988 constitutional reform, social security has remained within the jurisdiction of the national authorities.

1.1.5
Alongside the effective federalization of education in 1988 as a result of its devolution to the communities, in Flanders State education was also devolved. As a result, the Flemish community now operates in place of the State as the organizing authority for what was previously State education. The competent institution is the Autonome Raad voor het Gemeenschapsonderwijs (ARGO — Autonomous Council for Community Education). There is no equivalent institution in the French-speaking community. In that community, ARGO's task is carried out by the community's Minister for Education and his/her department.

* For all terms marked with an asterisk, see the glossary in Annex 4.

[1] Brassine, J. Dossiers du CRISP, *Les nouvelles institutions politiques de la Belgique*, Brussels, 1989; Deweerdt, M. *Het Nieuwe België*, Brussels, 1988; Rowies, L. *L'Enseignement en Communauté française de la 'petite' à la 'grande' communautarisation*, Brussels, 1989.

1.1.6
In 1989, the German-speaking community, which acquired autonomy as long ago as 1 June 1983 under a statute, came under the French-speaking Department of Education as regards German-language education. As a result of the most recent constitutional reform of 1988, responsibility for education in the German-speaking community was transferred automatically to that community, but the French community still provides logistical support to the German-speaking one.

1.1.7
As far as continuing training is concerned, in 1980 laws on regionalization and the devolution of responsibilities to the communities placed vocational training under the care of the three communities. Here, also, the French community still provides logistical support to the German-speaking community. As long ago as 1980, the French and the Flemish communities managed the vocational training budgets which are specifically provided for the purposes of funding institutions specialized in vocational training (opleidingsinstituten van de middenstand-training institutions for the 'middle classes',* agricultural training, and adult vocational training provided by the Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening (RVA)/Office national de l'emploi (ONEM) — National Employment Office).

On the occasion of the 1988 amendment of the Constitution, federalization also had an influence on the departments of the RVA/ONEM which had been responsible for vocational training until then. Those departments are now autonomous public agencies. As far as Flanders is concerned, the Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (VDAB — Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training) has responsibility for the placement of job-seekers in the Flemish region and for vocational training for job-seekers and employed persons within the Flemish community. The Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (FOREM — Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment) has the same responsibilities as its Flemish counterpart the VDAB, that is placement of job-seekers, but in its case in the Walloon region; in the German-language community it is called the Gemeinschaftliches und regionales Amt für Berufsbildung und Arbeitsbeschaffung (GRABA). The two public agencies have their own staff and budgets and hence are no longer dependent on the budgetary appropriations of the national authority. In Brussels both the VDAB and the FOREM deal with vocational training.

1.1.8
By contrast, a number of areas have remained national on account of their close links with social security and legislation on employment contracts. The legislation concerned is that linked with vocational training, such as paid educational leave, Royal Decree No 495 (system of alternating employment and training), industrial apprenticeships and the 1989-90 and 1991-92 interoccupational agreements,* under which 0.18 and 0.25% respectively of aggregate wages and salaries were set aside for the reintegration of high-risk groups into the employment market. These aspects of vocational training are still entrusted to the national Ministry of Employment and Labour for the purposes of supervision (inspection with regard to social legislation and employment contracts) and management (administration and supervision).

* See glossary, Annex 4.

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1.2. Population and working population

Population

1.2.1
On 1 January 1989, the population of Belgium comprised 9 058 855 Belgians and 868 757 foreigners. Consequently, on 1 January 1989, the total population came to 9 927 612 inhabitants distributed among 589 local authorities. The population breaks down as follows according to the region and the community to which inhabitants belong:

Population of Belgium as at 1 January 1989

	Flemish region — Flemish community	**Walloon region — French community**	**(Walloon region — German-speaking community)**	**Brussels region — Flemish and French communities**
Belgians	5 484 227	2 868 149	(57 873)	706 479
Foreigners	238 117	366 618	(8 859)	264 022
Total	5 722 344	3 234 767	(66 732)	970 501
%	57.64	32.58	(0.67)	9.78

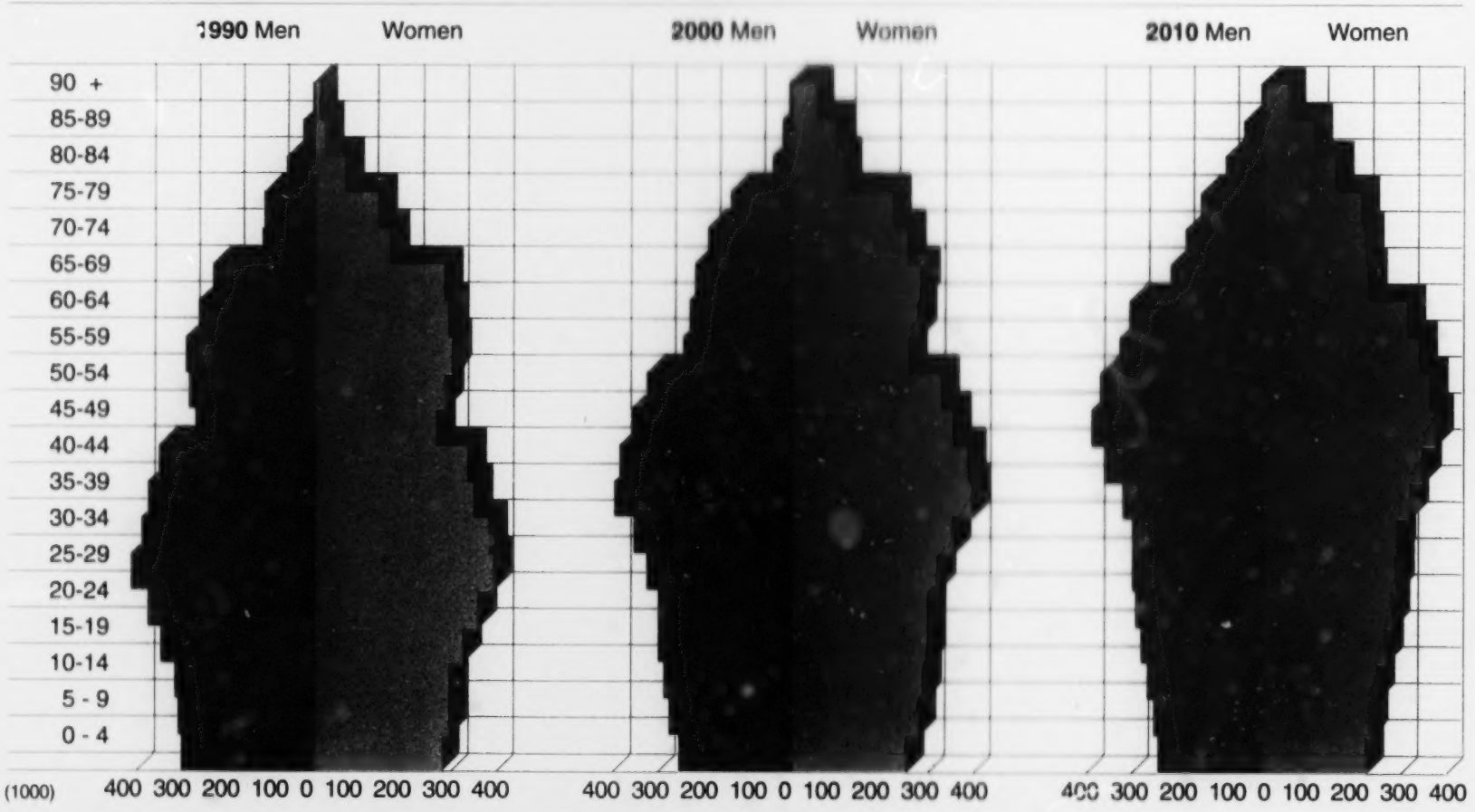
Sources: Eurostat, *Demographic statistics*, 1981, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 3C Brussels-Luxembourg; NIS/INS (Nationaal Instituut voor Statistiek/Institut national de statistique — National Statistical Institute), demographic statistics, 1981, 1986, 1990.

Compared with the total population in the previous year (1988), this represents a rise of 26 000, which is chiefly the result of natural increase (number of births — number of deaths).

The graph set out below shows the Belgian population by sex and age as at 1 January 1990 and forecasts for the years 2000 and 2010.

Age structure – Belgium

Estimate as at 1 January 1990 – Forecasts for 2000 and 2010



Source: Eurostat, Demographic statistics, 1992.

1.2.2

In 1980 the total population was rising compared with the 1960s and 1970s. In 1980 it came to 9 855 100. In 1985 the total population already numbered 9 857 700, which represents a rise of 2 600 people in the space of five years. Nevertheless, it is predicted that there will be a decline in 1995 of 12 500 by comparison with 1989 and in about the year 2000 the Belgian population is expected to be about 9 893 500, which represents a further decline of 21 000 as compared with 1995.

After the strong wave of immigration in the 1960s (1962-67) and 1970s (1970-77), a slight decline in absolute terms is now being recorded in the number of foreigners, as compared with the late 1970s/early 1980s: 890 038 in 1980 as compared with 897 630 in 1985 and 868 757 in 1989.

In the previous year (1988) the decline was slightly greater, to 858 650, even though there has been, and still is, no wave of emigration back to the country of origin or elsewhere.

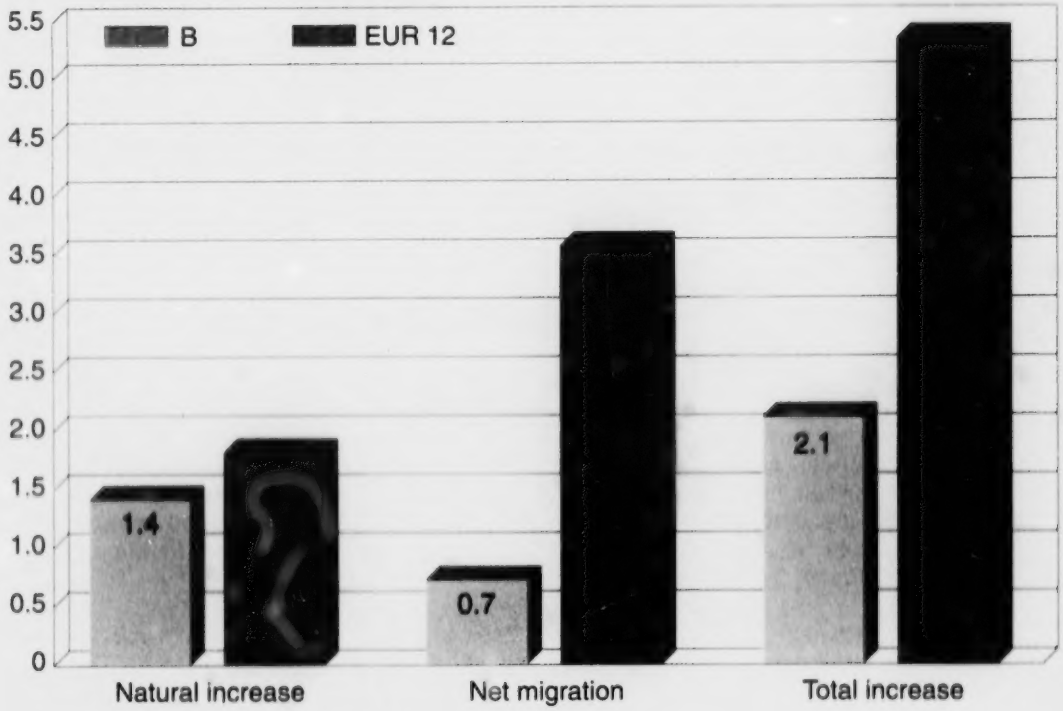
1.2.3

At the end of the 1970s, there was a wave of naturalization as a result of mixed marriages, naturalization and other legal procedures. In the mid-1980s naturalization remained steady. However the rise in the number of foreigners in 1989 as compared with the previous year (1988) is attributed more to the increase in net immigration and to the natural increase in the foreign population.

An attempt was made by means of a law enacted in 1984 to restrict illegal immigration in a number of local authority areas in the Brussels region. This may have caused a shift in illegal immigration to other regions. It appears from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) figures that in 1990, following the events of 1989, migration started from Eastern Europe to Belgium. In the Flemish region, which issues the lion's share of work permits, it appears from a breakdown of data with regard to work permits that the proportion of East Europeans is increasing, while Moroccans and Turks are obtaining work permits in the context of family reunification. This also explains why the number of Turks and Moroccans in Belgium continues to grow.

The following table gives comparative Eurostat figures for the year 1989.

Change in the population in 1989 (per 1 000 inhabitants average population)



Source: Eurostat, *A social portrait of Europe,* 1991.

1.2.4
On the other hand, since 1976 more Belgians have left the country each year than return to live there.[1]

The provenance of the foreigners, who are mostly second and third generation immigrants, breaks down as follows:

Total number of foreigners as at 1 January 1989

Origin			
EC Member States	536 665	France	91 444
		Italy	241 006
Other European countries	18 705	Yugoslavia	5 350
Asian countries	99 135	Turkey	79 460
African countries	172 913	Morocco	35 464
American countries	18 085	USA	11 624
Oceania	443	Australia	353
Refugees	21 355		
Stateless persons	1 456		
Total	**868 757**		

Source: NIS/INS, demographic statistics, 1990.

[1] Fonteyn, G. 'In 1989 verdriedubbelde Belgisch migrantenaantal', in Het Nieuwsblad, 21 May 1991; OECD *Système d'observation permanente des migrations,* Sociologisch Onderzoeksinstituut, Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, 1990.

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1.2.5
A special problem for the Brussels region is to determine to what language groups the inhabitants of Brussels belong (80% French speakers and 20% Dutch speakers). Foreigners account for approximately 30% of the population of Brussels.

1.2.6
Women make up 51.15% of the population as a whole.

1.2.7
The population of compulsory school age (between 6 and 18 years of age) amounted to approximately 1 579 300 pupils in the 1988/89 school year, or around 16% of the total population of Belgium. In the 1990/91 school year, the corresponding figure was 1 538 200. It is assumed that between 1995 and the year 2000 the population of compulsory school age will fall still further. The effects of the baby boom (up to 1965) have now worked through and the expectation is that the number of births will fall or remain stable in future years.

1.2.8
As far as the changing age structure is concerned, it is predicted that in future years there will be a general demographic decline and a weak migratory movement. The rate of increase of foreigners will slacken and absolute numbers will decline sharply. It is expected that in the year 2000 foreigners will account for 10% of the population of Belgium (at present 8.9%) and that this will be followed by a sharp fall.[1]

1.2.9
Another factor is the ageing of the Belgian population. The active population (between 20 and 59 years of age) is expected to fall from 54.9% in 1995 to 52% in the year 2000 and 47% in the year 2040.[2] Forecasts relating to fertility indicate that Belgian and immigrant women together will have an average of 1.93 children in 1995 and in the year 2000. For the period 2010 to 2040 there is expected to be a decline to an average of 1.8 children per woman. It appears from these demographic trends and forecasts that in less than 50 years Belgium will lose more than 1 million inhabitants.

[1] Eurostat, *Demographic statistics*, 1990, 3 C.
[2] Planbureau, 'Vooruitzichten van de activiteitsgraden', internal working document, Brussels, 1989.

The working population

1.2.10
Trends with regard to the working population of Belgium are shown in the following tables.

1.2.11

Working population of Belgium as at 30 June 1989

Structure of the working population	Men	Women	Total
1. Employed in Belgium	2 253 747	1 458 080	3 711 827
1.1. Wage- and salary-earners:			
• private sector	1 290 889	786 969	2 077 858
• public sector	556 853	411 582	968 435
Self-employed	406 005	259 529	665 534
2. Cross-border workers*	29 026	19 439	48 465
3. Unemployed	149 402	234 616	384 018
4. Total working population (=1 + 2 + 3)	2 432 175	1 712 135	4 144 310

* See glossary, Annex 4.

Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour, *Kijk op de arbeidsmarkt* series. the working population in Belgium, situation as at 30 June 1989. Brussels. 1990.

1.2.12
Since 1980, the working population of Belgium has risen by 74 831 or 2%, as can be seen from the following table.

Comparison of figures for the working population between 1980 and 1989

	Men	Women	Overall change
1. Employed in Belgium	– 183 506	+ 136 024	– 47 482
2. Employed abroad	+ 70	+ 1 389	+ 1 459
3. Self-employed and helpers*	+ 27 559	+ 31 587	+ 59 146
4. Employed labour force (Total: 1 + 2 + 3)	**– 155 877**	**+ 169 000**	**+ 13 123**
5. Unemployed entitled to benefit	+ 31 699	+ 30 009	+ 61 708
Total working population (total: 4 + 5)	**– 124 178**	**+ 199 009**	**+ 74 831**

* See glossary, Annex 4.

Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour, *Kijk op de arbeidsmarkt* series. the working population in Belgium, situation as at 30 June 1989. Brussels, 1990.

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It is noticeable from this table that women are accounting for an increasing proportion of the working population at every level; 12 years ago they were still the most strongly represented group in the category of unemployed persons entitled to benefit.[1]

1.2.13
Over the last 10 years, the increase in the number of unemployed women entitled to benefit has risen only slightly compared with the number of unemployed men entitled to benefit.

1.2.14
In 10 years, there has been an increase of more than 100 000 in the number of women employed in Belgium. In contrast, there has been a sharp decline in the number of men in employment compared with 1980.

1.2.15
The rise in part-time work — mainly, but not solely, carried out by women — is probably not irrelevant to this decline. In addition, 15 years ago the employment market had already reached saturation point, with the result that the declining trend in the number of employed men in Belgium is still continuing.

The following table shows the percentage development of part-time work in general as a proportion of total employment.

Part-time work in general (%)

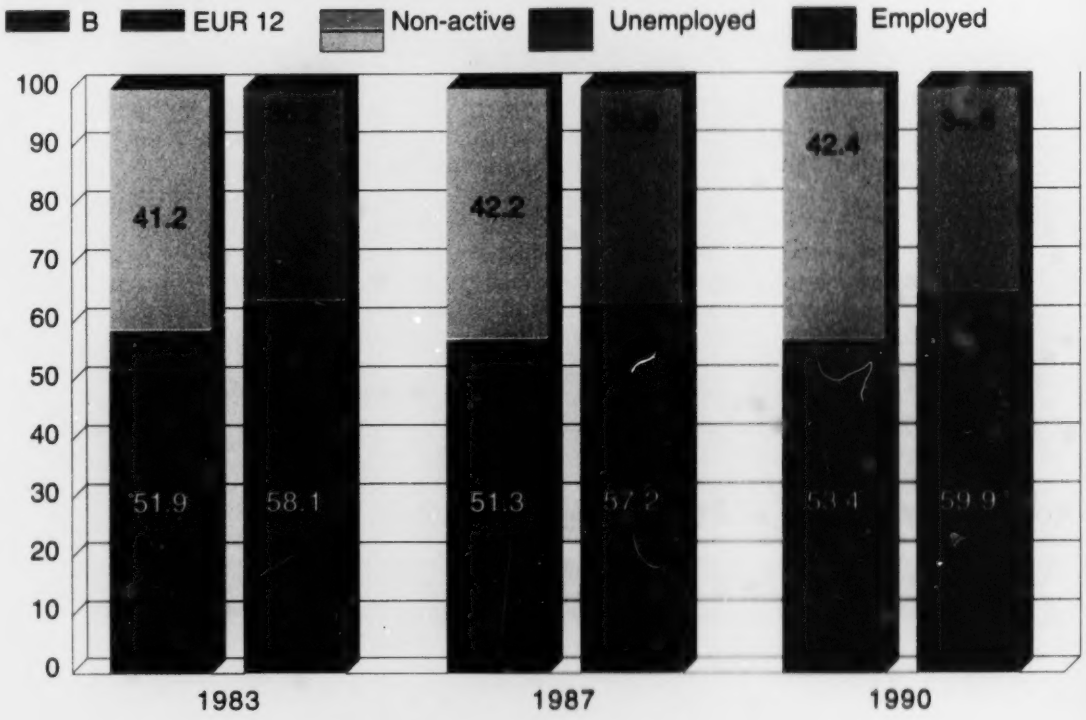
Year	Men	Women	Total
1980	1.3	16.3	6.4
1985	1.9	21.1	8.6
1988	2.0	23.2	9.8
1989	1.7	24.9	10.2

Source: NIS/INS, Enquête naar de arbeidskrachten, 1990.

[1] CEDEFOP, *Vocational training in Belgium*, Luxembourg, 1987.

The following graph on the working population aged between 14 and 64 years for 1983, 1987 and 1990 has been compiled from Eurostat statistics.

Population aged 14 to 64 years according to economic status, 1983, 1987 and 1990 (%)



Source: Eurostat, labour force surveys.

Unemployment in Belgium

1.2.16
At the end of January 1991, fully unemployed persons entitled to benefit numbered 369 221, made up of 149 068 men and 220 153 women.[1]

According to Eurostat statistics,[2] annual average registered unemployment as defined in the national legislation came to 369 000 unemployed persons entitled to benefit (142 000 men and 227 000 women) in 1980 and 557 000 unemployed persons entitled to benefit in 1985 (245 000 men and 312 000 women).

[1] RVA/ONEM monthly bulletin, January 1991.
[2] Eurostat, *Employment opportunities and unemployment*, 1989.

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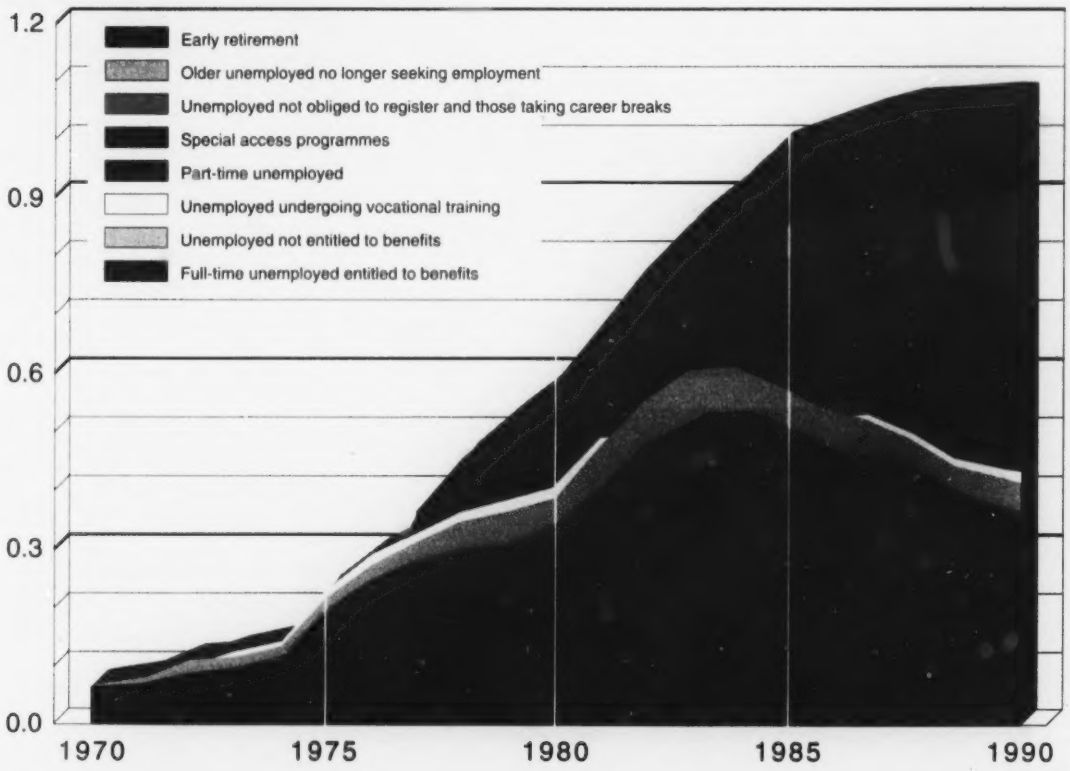
The graph below provides a clear picture of the number of 'unemployed' over the last 20 years.

Trends in unemployment in Belgium, 1970-90

Figures in absolute terms (millions)



Source: Alaluf, M.; Dillemans, R.; Dispersyn, M.; Nicaise, I., Vaesen, J.; van den Brande, L.; van Langendonck, J.; and Vogel-Posky, E.: *De werkloosheidsverzekering in de jaren negentig*, HIVA (Hoger Instituut van de Arbeid – Higher Institute of Labour), Universitaire Pers, Louvain, 1991.

Statistics on unemployment in Belgium depend on how the term 'unemployment' is defined.

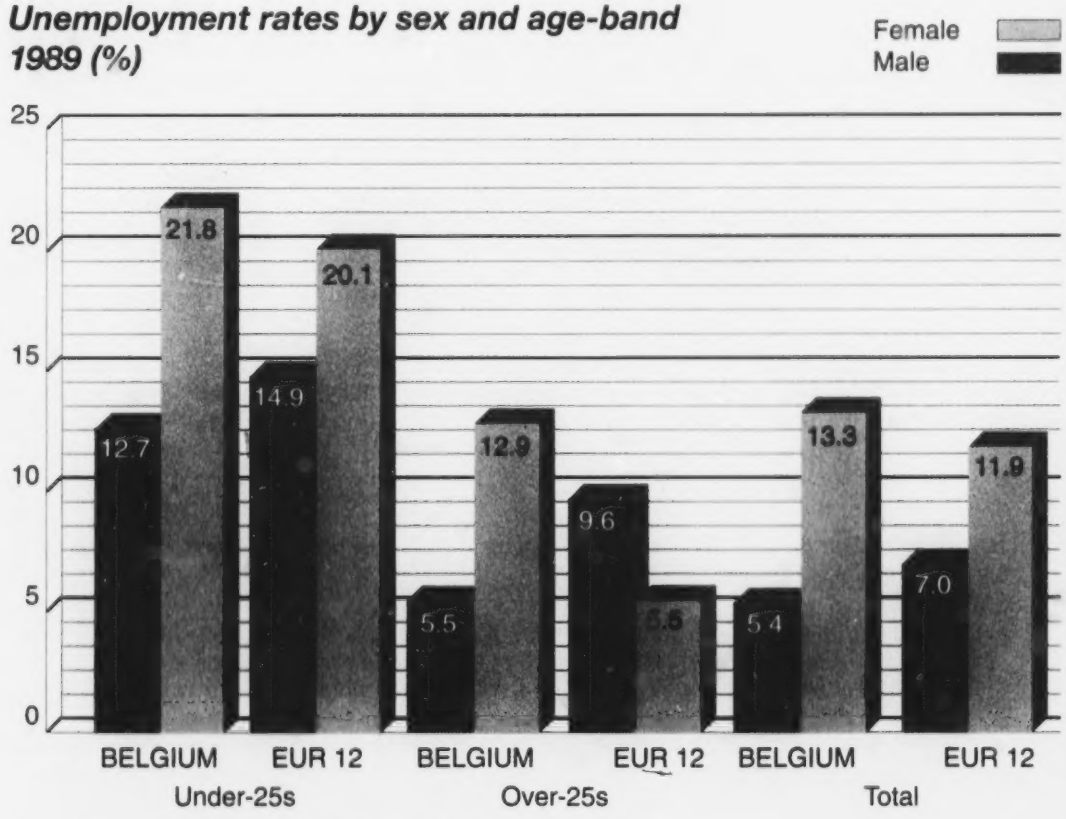
Which categories of unemployed persons are or are not covered thereby gives rise to different interpretations of the unemployment figures on the part of the trade unions and the RVA/ONEM every month when they are released by the RVA/ONEM. According to the graph, there has been a gradual fall in normal 'unemployment' as from 1985. Under a Royal Decree of 29 December 1984, all fully unemployed persons of at least 50 years of age who are entitled to benefit may, if they so request, be released from having to register as job-seekers, without forfeiting the right to unemployment benefits. Under a Royal Decree of 27 February 1985, certain fully unemployed persons may also be released, if they so request, on social or family grounds from registering as job-seekers. On the other hand, this fall must also be attributed to certain measures taken to combat unemployment.

The situation with regard to unemployed persons fully entitled to benefit as at 31 December 1990 is set out in the following table.

	Flemish region	Walloon region	Brussels region	Country
Men	55 304 35.79 %	67 403 42.45 %	20 292 47.70 %	142 999 40.20 %
Women	99 201 64.21 %	91 381 57.55 %	22 224 52.30 %	212 826 59.80 %
Total	**154 505**	**158 784**	**42 536**	**355 825**

NB: Part-time unemployed persons:
Unemployed persons working part time may, depending on the part-time work, claim (supplementary) unemployment benefit, provided that they have placed themselves on the employment market for a full-time job but no such job was (is) available for them.
Source: RVA/ONEM monthly bulletin, December 1990.

Unemployment rates by sex and age-band 1989 (%)



Source: Eurostat, *A social portrait of Europe*, 1991.

Unemployment among young persons

1.2.17

The situation as at December 1990 (72 411 unemployed under-25-year-olds (20.58%)) is an improvement compared with December 1985: 127 953 (28.58%) unemployed under-25-year-olds, made up of 49 120 (25.83%) men and 78 833 (30.62%) women. In December 1988 the corresponding figure was 84 917 (22.42%), made up of 29 812 (19.79%) men and 55 105 (24.15%) women, and in 1989 72 568 (20.58%), made up of 26 169 (18.56%) men and 46 399 (21.94%) women.[1]

Unemployed persons under the age of 25 years as at 31 December 1990

	Flemish region	Walloon region	Brussels region	Country
Men	10 167	14 760	2 797	27 724
	35.55 %	39.41 %	45.15 %	38.29 %
Women	18 596	22 693	3 398	44 687
	64.65 %	60.51 %	54.85 %	61.71 %
Total	**28 763**	**37 453**	**6 195**	**72 411**
	100 %	**100 %**	**100 %**	**100 %**

NB: Percentage of total fully unemployed persons entitled to benefit.

Long-term unemployment

1.2.18

As regards long-term unemployment (one year or more), it is observed that in December 1990 Wallonia came off worst as regards long-term female unemployment. As far as this specific problem is concerned, the Flemish region scores better than the other two regions (59.66%), although this figure is still fairly high (see the table below).

Unemployed persons aged up to 65 years of age who have been unemployed for one year or more expressed as a percentage of total unemployment December 1990 (%)

	Flemish region	Walloon region	Brussels region	Country
Men	48.31	58.21	57.17	54.23
Women	59.66	66.93	60.86	62.90
Total	**55.60**	**63.23**	**59.10**	**59.42**

[1] RVA/ONEM, 1989 annual report, statistical tables and charts; monthly bulletin, December 1985, 1988, 1989.

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In this case, also, the situation as at December 1990 (211 439 (59.42%) long-term unemployed aged up to 65 years of age) is an improvement compared with December 1989: 221 350 (62.78%) long-term unemployed made up of 81 536 (57.82%) men and 139 814 (66.10%) women.

In 1988 the corresponding figure was 253 690 (66.98%), made up of 93 949 (62.38%) long-term unemployed men and 159 741 (70.01%) long-term unemployed women; in 1985 the figure was 302 182 (67.51%), made up of 116 849 (61.44%) men and 185 333 (71.99%) women.

Long-term unemployment is steadily declining, *inter alia*, as a result of the employment policy pursued in recent years in Belgium.

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1.3. Economy

1.3.1

One of the major economic indicators is the employment trend in the three major employment sectors (primary, secondary and tertiary). Falling or rising employment in the various main sectors can provide a picture of the development of those sectors of the economy and of which sectors are open to a positive investment policy which will determine growth in the economy. A high degree of employment is closely related to a sound investment policy.

1.3.2

There is a correlation between low interest rates and a high level of investment by both domestic and foreign investors. The following tables show the trend of domestic paid employment in 1980, 1985 and 1989 for both the public and the private sectors.[1]

1.3.3

1985 compared with 1980

Sector	Private			Public		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Primary	+42	+344	+386	—	—	—
Secondary	−172 064	−32 822	−204 886	−1 912	+124	−1 788
Tertiary	+497	+20 365	+20 862	−14 822	+33 013	+18 191
Total	−171 525	−12 113	−183 638	−16 734	+33 137	+16 403

Overall total: −167 235

1.3.4

1989 compared with 1985

Sector	Private			Public		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Primary	+677	+1 103	+1 780	—	—	—
Secondary	−18 740	−668	−19 408	+1 804	+272	+2 076
Tertiary	+48 445	+85 391	+133 836	−27 433	+28 949	+1 516
Total	+30 392	+85 816	+116 208	−25 629	+29 221	+3 592

Overall total: +119 800

[1] Ministry of Employment and Labour, *Kijk op de arbeidsmarkt* series, the employed population of Belgium, summary tables since 1970, Brussels, 1991.

1.3.5
In the five years between 1980 and 1985, paid employment fell by more than 165 000 jobs. This is attributable solely to employment in the private sector, the stimulating force for the growth of the Belgian economy, and the largest decline was recorded in the most important sector, namely the secondary sector.

1.3.6
In spite of the sharp fall in the private sector, employment rose in 1985 in the public sector to 964 890 jobs, which represents an increase of 16 403 jobs over 1980. The lion's share of this increase was accounted for by services (the tertiary sector). The increase in the government sector consisted solely of women.

1.3.7
Overall, between 1980 and 1985 there was a fall in employment. Belgium was in a relative recession. In the mid-1980s the tide gradually turned.

Compared with 1985, there was a rise in the four years to 1989 of approximately 120 000 jobs, which mainly reflects spectacular growth in the tertiary sector, where there was an increase involving twice as many women as men.

The most important sector, the secondary sector, still records a decline, but it is only 10% of the fall experienced between 1980 and 1985.

1.3.8
If all sectors are considered together over the last 10 years, the following trend can be seen from the following tables.

In the space of 10 years, the number of persons in employment in Belgium has risen by 4%. The number of self-employed has decreased by almost 10% compared with 1981. The number of persons in gainful employment fell between 1984 and 1985 by about 8% as a result of the economic recession. There has been a slight recovery (10%) since 1985 in the number of persons in gainful employment.

As far as the last category 'other service industries' is concerned, in 1981 employment in the public sector came to 749 911 or about 63% of persons in gainful employment in that category; in 1985, 772 368 or 62.5%; and in 1990 792 357 or 59.5%. Although in absolute terms the number of persons in gainful employment rose in 1985 in comparison with 1981 and in 1990 in comparison with 1985, within that category (other service industries) the percentage showed a relative decline of 3.5% over 10 years. This means that private-sector employment within that category (employed persons, helpers and self-employed persons) increased even more.

Employment by sector 1981 — Belgium

Sector	Helpers	Self-employed	In gainful employment	Total	%
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	18 291	79 838	14 712	112 841	3.1
Energy and water-resources management	31	304	61 645	61 980	1.7
Extraction of non-energy minerals, chemical industry	545	2 865	201 207	204 617	5.6
Metalworking industry	1 255	7 677	288 644	297 576	8.2
Wood industry	1 095	7 527	36 776	45 398	1.2
Construction	4 899	40 144	213 505	258 548	7.1
Foodstuffs industry plus sugar factories and refineries	3 230	10 515	97 523	111 263	3
Textiles, leather, shoe and clothing industries	1 019	5 592	113 621	120 232	3.3
Paper, rubber and plastics processing industries	1 522	5 614	85 905	93 041	2.5
Commerce, catering, repair businesses	71 442	203 504	359 446	634 392	17.5
Transport	2 983	11 421	260 504	274 908	7.6
Banking and insurance industries	6 108	37 365	183 062	226 535	6.2
Other service industries	13 216	70 566	1 106 050	1 189 832	33
Total	**125 636**	**482 932**	**3 022 600**	**3 631 168**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour *Kijk op de Arbeidsmarkt* series, the working population in Belgium, summary tables since 1970, Brussels, 1991.

1

Employment by sector 1985 — Belgium

Sector	Helpers	Self-employed	In gainful employment	Total	%
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	19 093	74 393	15 520	109 006	3.1
Energy and water-resources management	39	283	56 336	56 658	1.6
Extraction of non-energy minerals, chemical industry	605	2 611	175 870	179 086	5.2
Metalworking industry	1 341	8 211	260 931	270 483	7.9
Wood industry	1 179	7 235	33 138	41 552	1.2
Construction	5 676	40 128	157 523	203 327	6
Foodstuffs industry plus sugar factories and refineries	2 601	10 028	94 450	107 074	3.1
Textiles, leather, shoe and clothing industries	767	4 775	106 610	112 152	3.2
Paper, rubber and plastics processing industries	1 725	6 108	83 221	91 054	2.6
Commerce, catering, repair businesses	75 098	208 024	356 420	639 542	18.5
Transport	2 577	13 357	127 545	143 479	4.2
Banking and insurance industries	7 465	47 354	201 180	255 999	7.4
Other service industries	14 771	81 360	1 139 238	1 235 369	36
Total	**132 937**	**503 867**	**2 807 982**	**3 444 768**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour *Kijk op de Arbeidsmarkt* series, the working population in Belgium, summary tables since 1970, Brussels, 1991.

Employment by sector 1990 — Belgium

Sector	Helpers	Self-employed	In gainful employment	Total	%
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	17 653	64 474	17 886	100 013	2.7
Energy and water-resources management	48	218	38 495	38 761	1
Extraction of non-energy minerals, chemical industry	696	2 333	169 521	172 550	4.6
Metalworking industry	1 480	8 717	259 483	269 680	7.1
Wood industry	1 312	7 914	33 154	42 380	1.1
Construction	6 863	44 737	184 065	235 665	6.2
Foodstuffs industry plus sugar factories and refineries	1 718	9 174	93 478	104 370	2.8
Textiles, leather, shoe and clothing industries	414	3 953	94 119	98 486	2.6
Paper, rubber and plastics processing industries	2 038	6 626	85 449	94 113	2.5
Commerce, catering, repair businesses	81 182	206 960	404 303	692 445	18.4
Transport	2 087	10 826	243 988	256 901	6.8
Banking and insurance industries	9 513	65 168	253 085	327 766	8.8
Other service industries	17 411	101 577	1 211 923	1 330 911	35.4
Total	**142 514**	**532 677**	**3 088 949**	**3 764 041**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Employment and Labour *Kijk op de Arbeidsmarkt* series, the working population in Belgium, summary tables since 1970, Brussels, 1991.

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1.3.9
Overall, there has been economic growth due to a shift of employment from the secondary to the tertiary sector, on the one hand, and to the creation of jobs in the tertiary sector and the gradual recovery of the secondary sector to its former level, on the other.

Since 1985, gross national product has risen from BFR 4 777 billion to BFR 5 917.1 billion in 1989 or from ECU 113.73 billion to ECU 140.88 billion.

1.3.10
Eurostat statistics for 1973, 1975, 1977, 1981 and 1983-90 show the employment trend for the three main areas of activity (primary, secondary and tertiary). Employment in the agricultural, industrial and services sectors is shown in the following table and graphs (as a percentage and by sex) according to the NACE occupational classification.

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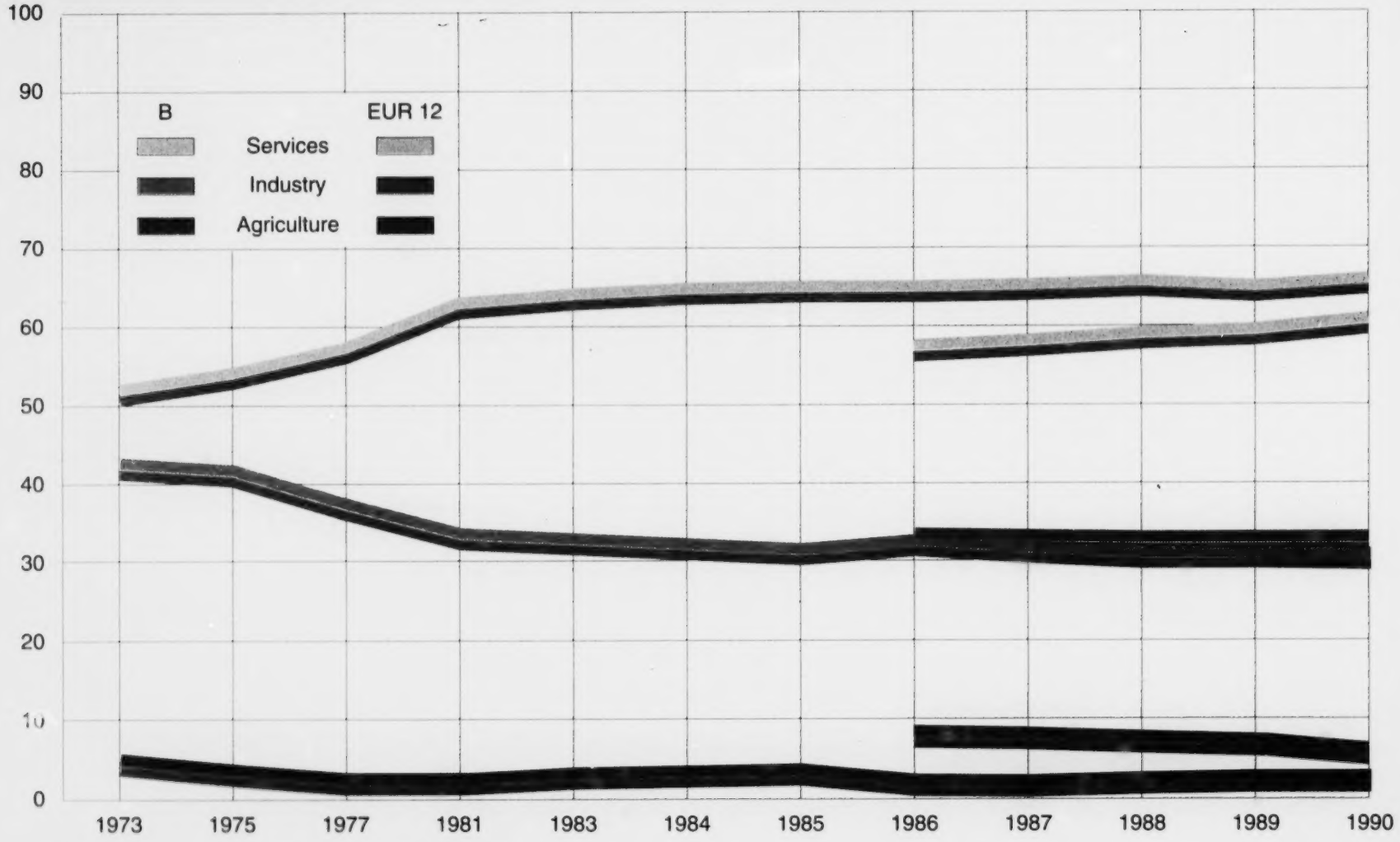
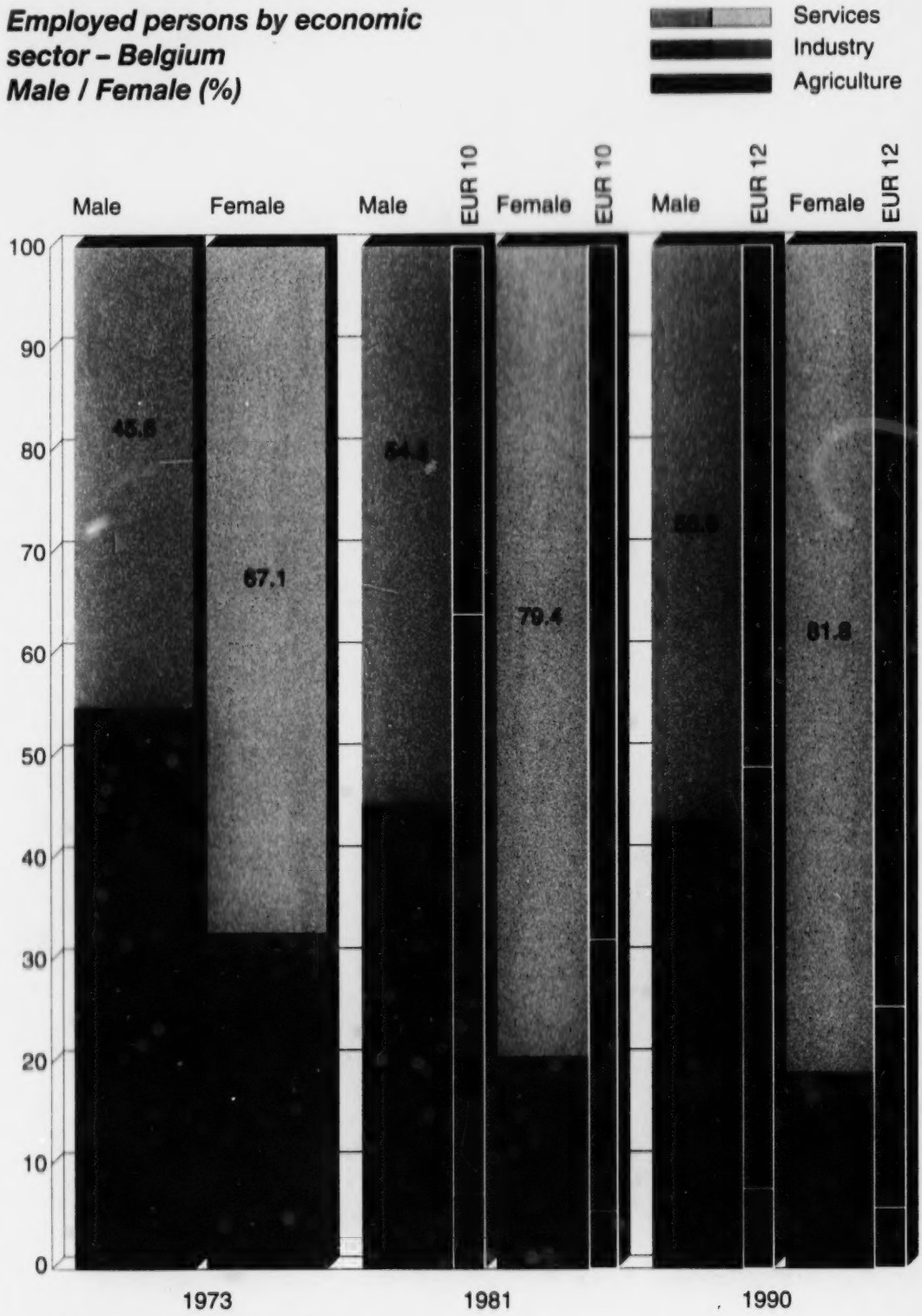
Employment by economic sector – Belgium



Source: Eurostat, labour force surveys, 1980-91.

Employed persons by economic sector – Belgium
Male / Female (%)



Source: Eurostat, labour force surveys.

Number employed in industry and services according to NACE classification (%)

	1983	1987		1990	
	B	B	EUR 12	B	EUR 12
Industry					
Energy and water	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.1	1.5
Chemical industry	7.2	6.0	4.5	5.1	3.6
Metal manufacturing, engineering	10.5	10.4	11.6	8.6	10.0
Other manufacturing industries	11.8	11.4	11.5	9.8	10.4
Building and civil engineering	5.8	5.3	7.2	6.1	7.8
Services					
Distributive trades, hotels	12.4	12.5	16.0	18.7	18.9
Transport and communication	9.2	8.4	6.4	7.1	5.9
Banking and insurance	6.7	7.1	7.7	7.9	8.0
Public administration	11.3	12.6	9.7	9.8	7.6
Other services	22.6	23.7	20.9	22.6	19.7

Source: Eurostat, labour force surveys, 1983, 1987 and 1990.

NB: NACE — general industrial classification of economic activities within the European Communities.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEMS

2.1. Vocational training in Belgium

The birth and development of vocational training in Belgium

2.1.1
As in all parts of Europe and in the industrialized countries of the time, the creation in the 19th century and at the turn of the 20th century of factories and large production units, which brought together workers and employees charged with increasingly complex tasks, posed for Belgium a century ago the problem of preparing workers for the practice of their occupations and trades. It would take too much space to describe the genesis and development of this movement in the trade guilds. The action they took and the repercussions proved very important in the large towns of Flanders and Wallonia, and in Brussels.

2.1.2
This on-the-job training organized by master craftsmen and journeymen for the benefit of apprentices (the training of those who had no skills by those who had) was the starting-point for the vocational training movement in Belgium, since employers and technical executives in large firms were the first to feel the need to provide special training for young workers starting in a trade.

2.1.3
It would certainly be an exaggeration to say that the reason for the movement was goodwill towards the workers. It affected only a minority of workers. At the outset, it was confined to providing training for the most able, especially for those who, within the enterprise, were to be the hinge between the proprietor and his shareholders and the unskilled amorphous masses at the bottom of the ladder.

2.1.4
Some in-firm 'schools' still exist today. They have changed their image, modified their methods and redefined their objectives, but they still perpetuate the old idea of the benevolent, paternalistic employer linked materially, if not philosophically, to the destiny of the workers.

2.1.5
The real vocational training movement was, however, essentially born of parallel or even simultaneous social action by militant socialists, on the one hand, and by Catholic reacton, on the other, as symbolized by the encyclicals 'Rerum Novarum' and 'Quadragesimo Anno'.

Therefore, it is no accident that in Belgium technical and vocational education was first and, to a large extent still is, organized by the Catholic Church and by regional, provincial and municipal political forces. Here, militant socialists adapted the theory of the class struggle by giving workers better preparation for their trade, thus freeing them from the training organized by the employers, which they classed as demeaning. The interest of the State in these activities can scarcely be measured against the significance of its own initiatives in the field of technical education because, whatever his or her political tendencies, each Minister for Public Education (now known as the Minister for Education) pursued his or her own advantage and gave preference at one time to one system of education and at others to another. His or her interest, however, focused mainly on general

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secondary and higher education and on the universities, where the same duality appeared: free education* versus State education.

2.1.6
This was a long-drawn-out engagement, the vicissitudes of which led to the fall of some governments and to the passing of various laws favouring one or other system of education. The dispute did not, however, prevent many contacts being established between undertakings and technical schools. The former realized the importance of seeing their own skills' needs reflected in the syllabus and courses; the latter found it easier to place their students by giving them the know-how and skills required for specific jobs. The practical result was that factory and workplace representatives regularly sat on the examination boards and the efforts of the students were often crowned with the offer of employment, in addition to the certificate or diploma.

This encounter perhaps marked the beginning of the joint management of vocational training activities, particularly where they were addressed more directly to workers in undertakings who wished to improve their skills, acquire a qualification and, often, obtain promotion within the undertaking. The evening classes were, in fact, the mirror image of the day classes and even though the teaching administration often confused B classes* (evening) with A classes* (day), industrialists never did. They always preferred the product of the evening class, with his or her work experience, to the young technician from day classes, ignorant of the realities of real working life. During this time, political leaders from all sides met and consulted.

The 1939-45 war had drawn attention to certain absurdities and the postwar years, in particular, had shown clearly how much the escalation in the defence of slogans combined with a series of ineffective budgets had led to mediocrity in educational establishments, which were ill-equipped for technological progress.

2.1.7
In 1958, a school pact put an end to competition and chauvinism. The State, as the provider of funds, became the accountant for all State or State-subsidized education. It appointed and paid the teaching staff or gave grants towards salaries.

It set up, constructed and maintained schools or met the costs of their upkeep, based on student numbers, within the framework of an overall agreement in which all the organizing bodies finally collaborated in a united programme of action under State control. From then on, the creation of schools and their departments, and the recruitment of new teachers were all part of a plan which budgetary constraints kept to a minimum.

This situation became particularly serious between 1960 and 1974. During that time, undertakings were being modernized and occupations were changing, some disappearing altogether to be replaced by new ones. At the production, administration and industrial management levels, constant changes and continuing training were called for. At the same time, the increase in the standard of living and full employment contributed to the reform of general and vocational education in that sense.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

In order to fill the many vacant positions, large numbers of often inexperienced unskilled workers were brought in from European countries, and also from North Africa and Turkey. This influx, however, could only fill the gap in low-skilled jobs, for example in the construction industry.

The various ministries concerned tried to correct the imbalance between supply and demand by amending the relevant legislation. In 1963, the Ministry of Employment and Labour opened the doors of its vocational training centres for adults (RVA/ONEM centres), which had previously been reserved for the unemployed, to workers in undertakings. In the five-year plan (1970-75), which envisaged some 30 000 training places annually, 20 000 people were to be trained in undertakings or with their collaboration. Some technical schools collaborated closely with large undertakings in order to meet their demand for skilled workers. This period also saw the creation, sometimes chaotic, of centres specializing in vocational training.

Along with the official bodies which underwent reorganization in order to satisfy the new objectives, these centres also tried to respond to the growing vocational training needs of undertakings in the field of supplementary vocational training.* From 1974 to 1975, the targets of the five-year plan were not achieved because Belgium was beginning to feel the impact of the economic crisis which still affects both it and its neighbours. The number of vacancies continued to fall steadily, watched by a mass of job-seekers in which the under-25s accounted for a larger proportion than in the working population.

In 1968, a revised Law on unemployment granted out-of-work school-leavers the right to draw unemployment benefit if they were still without work 75 days after registering (this was subsequently raised to 150 days). This was one consequence of the great fear which arose out of 'May 1968'. This culminated in recognition of the entitlement to unemployment benefit of young people before they could assert their right to work. Since then, from year to year, most young people, thanks to their being better informed, have registered with the National Employment Office as soon as their final examination was over and thus have safeguarded their right to unemployment benefit. At the same time, the period of prosperity led to a *de facto* prolongation of schooling which, limited officially to 14 years of age, resulted in young people remaining in school up to the age of 16 and even beyond. The crisis intensified this trend because the lack of work opportunities forced young people and their parents to choose courses or apprenticeship rather than a period of unfruitful inactivity. The level of school education and training rose steadily, particularly that of women. Against the background of female emancipation, women wanted to participate in working life and take up employment. However, the workers' and employers' traditional prejudices against the employment of women were still present.

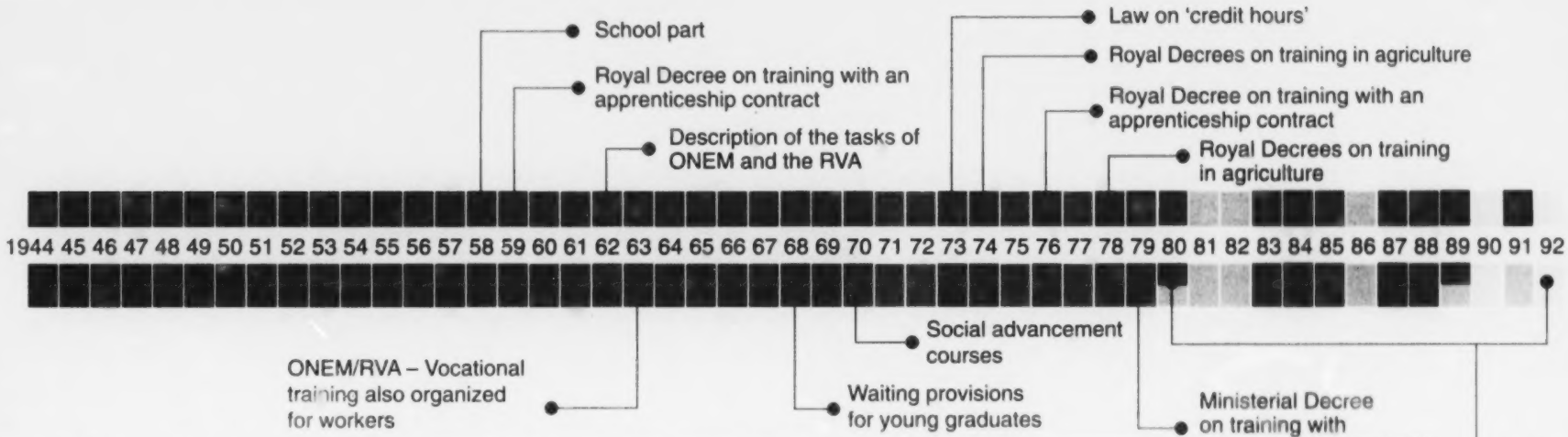
In education, too, occupational objectives were neglected in favour of measures directed towards the traditional role of women as mothers, wives and housewives.

This dual trend — on the one hand, the desire of women to find work outside the home and, on the other, their lack of preparation for working life — produced an inevitable rise in the level of female unemployment which had nothing to do with economic influences. The following graph shows the historical development of vocational training in Belgium.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

Laws and legal provisions – Belgium


School part
Royal Decree on training with an apprenticeship contract
Description of the tasks of ONEM and the RVA
Law on 'credit hours'
Royal Decrees on training in agriculture
Royal Decree on training with an apprenticeship contract
Royal Decrees on training in agriculture
1944 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92
ONEM/RVA – Vocational training also organized for workers
Social advancement courses
Waiting provisions for young graduates
Ministerial Decree on training with apprenticeship contracts
NATIONAL
FLEMISH COMMUNITY
FRENCH COMMUNITY
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

1980 Laws giving powers to the regions and communities: vocational training is placed under the aegis of the communities

1983 Extending full time compulsory education to 16 years of age and part-time to 18 years of age – Law on industrial apprenticeship

1984 Decree on regionalizing agricultural training in the French community

1985 Paid training leave

1987 Royal Decree No 495 on the employment/training agreement – Decree of the executive of the French community on vocational apprenticeship companies (EAP) and integrated development activities (AID)

1988 Revision of the Constitution – Transfer of education to the communities

1989 Creation of the Flemish Office for Employment and Vocational Training (VDAB) and the Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment (FOREM)

1991 French community Decree on education and social advancement (EPS):
— harmonization of day and evening classes;
— standards for part-time training.
Decrees on the creation of the 'Vlaamse Instituut voor het Zelfstandig Ondernemen' (VIZO) in the Flemish community and the Institute for Continuing Training for Trades and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (IFPME) in the French community

Recent developments

2.1.8

The characteristic feature of the 1980s was combating unemployment. Much attention was paid to unemployment among young people, which was tackled in a curative and preventive manner. The extension of compulsory education was initially preventive in scope. Also in connection with vocational training for young people, the extension of compulsory education constitutes an important milestone. Compulsory education now extends to 16 years of age in the case of full-time education and to 18 in the case of part-time education. The assumption behind the extension of part-time education is that if a person is tired of school it does not necessarily mean that he or she is tired of learning. Part-time education can be supplemented by on-the-job training or more practically oriented training. In addition to the extension of compulsory education, other preventive measures include 'alternating' training formulas, which are intended to facilitate the transition from school to work.

Increasing the provision of training for the unemployed has a curative effect in the fight against unemployment. The National Employment Office and non-profit-making organizations (VZWs/ASBLs) have received the necessary appropriations for training unemployed persons from their respective communities and the European Social Fund (ESF). The establishment of redevelopment areas — above all in Wallonia and, on the Flemish side, principaly in the province of Limburg — must also be seen as part of a curative approach to unemployment.

2.1.9

The 1980s have also been characterized by the effects of constitutional reform. Various views and achievements of vocational training policy within the National Employment Office have been determined by the community ministers. Training centres for new technology* have been set up for the Flemish community. Admittedly, the observation and guidance centres* for younger persons have been cut back. In the French community, more stress has been placed on the social aspect by means of reception centres, centres for vocational guidance and sociovocational initiatives or observation and guidance centres.*

Since 1 March 1989, the regions and the communities have gone their own way with regard to the former RVA/ONEM through the establishment of autonomous public services such as the Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (VDAB — Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training), the Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle (FOREM — Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment), the renamed Regionales Amt für Berufsbildungs und Arbeitsbeschaffung (GRABA — Regional Office for Vocational Training and Placement) of the German-speaking community and the Brussels Regional Placement Service (BGDA).

The active battle against long-term unemployment has taken the form within the VDAB, not only of link-up training courses (schakelopleiding)* and Weer-Werk (Work Again) as a guidance and counselling activity, but also of active cooperation with industry: as a result of the interoccupational agreements of 1989-90 and 1991-92, 0.18 and 0.25%, respectively, of aggregate wages and salaries have been set aside, *inter alia*, for combating long-term unemployment.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

2.1.10
Since 1989, responsibility for education has been fully devolved to the communities; in this connection many decrees have been issued or initiated, the effects of which can only be assessed in the longer term.

2.1.11
In the mid-1980s, the Law on credit hours was revised and the amending legislation replaced it with the Law on paid educational leave. The system of credit hours* was by no means an overwhelming success. From 1975 to 1976, a virtually constant decline in the number of persons taking advantage of the scheme was recorded: 20 000 in 1974 as compared with 12 000 in 1981. Criticism from employees and employers culminated in an opinion of the National Labour Council* (NAR/CNT June 1979).

2.1.12
It was not until 1985 that this opinion was translated into legislation as a result of the amending Law of 22 January 1985 on paid educational leave. In comparison with the Law on credit hours,* entitlement to paid educational leave was extended to cover university courses not held by day, in addition to social advancement courses, part-time art education, university-level courses and certain training courses in agriculture and for the middle classes. Even industrial training and preparation for and sitting examinations of the Central Examination Board* qualify one for paid educational leave.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

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2.2. Education for young persons and initial training

Introduction

2.2.1
In Belgium, vocational training for young people up to the age of 18 takes place mainly in the education system, more specifically in schools in which vocational and technical secondary education (see 2.2.6) is stressed. In contrast to Germany, only a small group of young people take up vocational training through apprenticeship or in the context of training for the middle classes (see 2.2.18).

The introduction of new forms of alternating training as a means of combating unemployment among young people has made the landscape of initial training more complex in the course of the 1980s. They afford additional possibilities, *inter alia,* for school-weary students in part-time compulsory education (see 2.2.16) or industrial apprenticeships (see 2.2.21) or for young job-seekers who have completed primary education and have reached the end of compulsory education, such as the employment/training contract (see 2.2.25) and the specific initiatives in the French community, namely 'entreprises d'apprentissage professionnel' (see 2.2.32) and 'actions intégrées de développement' (see 2.2.37).

The reader can also judge that those formulas, which are certainly of interest from the point of view of the sound adjustment of training to the employment market, are not reaching any high peaks from the quantitative point of view.

The Belgian education system

2.2.2
Before the enactment of the Law of 29 June 1983 (Belgian Official Gazette, 6. 7. 1983), compulsory education went from the age of 6 to 14. The Law has extended full-time compulsory education to the age of 16, after which there is a period of compulsory part-time education to the age of 18, which can be carried out either by continuing in secondary education with a full curriculum or by attending education with a limited curriculum* or training recognized as meeting the requirements of compulsory education.

Even before 1983, the rise in the standard of living in the 1960s and the fact that young mothers had better access to the labour-market resulted, *de facto,* in children under the age of 6 attending nursery school. A further effect was that between 55 and 60% of young people remained in school up to the age of 18, the age at which higher secondary education normally ends.

2.2.3
Education in Belgium divides into the following levels: basic education (nursery and primary education), secondary education and higher education.

2.2.4
Basic education consists of nursery education for children between 2½ and 6 years old. Since the 1960s, nursery education has become an integral part of the school system.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

Nursery education in Belgium

Community	School year 1980/81	1984/85	1988/89	1990/91
Flanders	223 973	236 247	213 735	241 102
French community (including German community)	160 721	159 636	155 584	159 642
Total	384 694	395 883	369 319	373 744

Source: Flemish community, Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community, statistical yearbooks, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1991.

Over a 10-year period, the number of children in nursery education declined by 10 950 or 2.8% compared with the 1980/81 school year.

2.2.5

Primary education, the second component of basic education, is intended for children between 6 and 12 years of age and consists of six school years divided into three two-year grades. Irrespective of the child's performance, he or she cannot attend primary school for more than eight years. From primary level onwards, there is a special education scheme designed for children with physical, mental or behavioural handicaps.

Primary education in Belgium

Community	School year 1980/81	1984/85	1988/89	1990/91
Flanders	476 226	429 567	434 998	430 578
French community (including German community)	381 192	338 640	320 631	314 304
Total	857 418	768 207	755 629	744 882

Source: Flemish community, Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community, statistical yearbooks, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1991.

Over a 10-year period, the number of children in primary education fell by 112 536 or roughly 13% compared with the 1980/81 school year.

2.2.6

The second level of education is secondary education for young people between 12 and 18 years of age. There are four different forms of education in secondary education:

(i) general education (ASO) — here the emphasis is on broad academic training with a view above all to higher education;
(ii) technical education (TSO) — this concentrates above all on general and technical/academic subjects; afterwards TSO pupils go into a trade or pursue their studies in higher education;
(iii) art education (KSO) — here general broad development is coupled with active art skills; afterwards KSO pupils go into a trade or move on to higher education;
(vi) vocational education (BSO) — this is a form of practical education in which a specific trade is taught at the same time as general academic tuition; transition to a form of higher education is not ruled out.

A diploma of entitlement to commence higher education is awarded after the sixth year of ASO, KSO and TSO. Students who have completed vocational secondary education (BSO) obtain a diploma and must complete a seventh year in order to be admitted to higher education. After the fourth year of vocational education, there is a fifth specialization or supplementary year and a seventh specialization or supplementary year is added for the purpose of obtaining a diploma of secondary education. A fifth or seventh specialization year may also be taken in the case of technical secondary education (TSO), vocational secondary education (BSO) and secondary education in art (KSO). In the case of certain fields of study, two or three years' supplementary secondary vocational education (aanvullend secundair beroepsonderwijs)* can be attended after secondary education. After the first year of supplementary secondary vocational education, admittance can be gained to higher education of the short type (HOKT). This form of education (supplementary secondary vocational education) does not culminate in a secondary diploma but a certificate is awarded.

2.2.7

In Belgium, there are three groups of organizing authorities for education:

(i) community education (in Flanders this education is organized by the ARGO (Autonomous Council for Community Education) on behalf of the Flemish community);
(ii) subsidized official education, organized by provincial authorities (provincial subsidized official education) and by municipal authorities (municipal subsidized official education); and
(iii) subsidized free education;* this privately organized education chiefly comprises free Catholic schools.

The latter organizing authority accounts for the largest number of students. It is followed by the municipal schools, the community schools and, finally, education organized by the provincial schools.

2.2.8

Since 1971, the traditional type of education (type II) in Belgium has coexisted with reformed secondary education (VSO or type I). As from the 1989/90 school year, a new structure is being progressively introduced in all Flemish schools, namely the 1989 or unitary structure.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

2.2.9
The traditional type of education was organized in two three-year cycles: the lower cycle and the upper cycle. In the lower cycle of TSO and BSO, there is a fourth qualification year and a fifth specialization or supplementary year.

2.2.10
Reformed secondary education was designed to gear education to suit pupils' needs and potential, the main aims being:

(i) progressive guidance of pupils;
(ii) final choice of areas of study is postponed;
(iii) common instruction avoids pupils specializing too early and equivalence of the forms of education is guaranteed in so far as flexible opportunities are provided for moving between the various forms of education.

Reformed secondary education consists of three grades, each lasting two school years: in the first grade there is no possibility of switching, except in the case of the second year of BSO. As from the second grade (the third school year), the pupils choose between the four forms of education (ASO, TSO, KSO and BSO), and from the fifth year there are a limited number of possibilities for switching between the various forms of education on certain conditions.

In reformed secondary education, a distinction is drawn between the promotion section and the qualification section. The distinction lies in the fact that the promotion section prepares pupils for higher education whereas the qualification section prepares pupils directly for the world of work, although the possibility of further study also remains open at this stage. The promotion section consists of six school years and can be attended in ASO, TSO and KSO as from the third school year.

The qualification section divides into the short and the long type. Qualification of the long type covers four school years and only starts from the third year, since the first grade (the first two school years) does not differentiate between the forms of education, with the exception of the second school year of BSO. Qualification of the long type may be accomplished by means of a seventh specialization year in TSO, KSO and BSO. Qualification of the short type is also possible under these forms of education but it lasts for two years (third and fourth years); it may possibly be supplemented by a fifth specialization or supplementary year.

2.2.11
Finally, as from the 1989/90 school year, the 1989 or unitary structure has been introduced in Flanders with a view to combining the advantages of the above two educational types while eliminating competition between the two types of education. Among other things, the rationalization of the numerous options within reformed secondary education has paved the way for the introduction of the unitary structure in Flanders. As from the 1994/95 school year, types I and II are to be abolished and there will be only one type of education, the 1989 or unitary structure.

Under the unitary structure, in addition to basic education, which is identical for all pupils in a given year, pupils can make a number of choices — the optional part. Again there are three two-year grades.

2.2.12

Secondary education in Belgium

Community	School year 1980/81	1984/85	1988/89	1990/91
Flanders	501 587	492 931	456 979	440 159
French community (including German community)	347 582	366 151	366 697	353 163
Total	849 169	859 082	823 676	793 322.

Source: Flemish community, Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community, statistical yearbooks, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1991.

Over a 10-year period, the number of students in secondary education fell in comparison with the 1980/81 school year by 55 847 or 6.6%.

2.2.13

At secondary level, there is a special education scheme — as there is at primary level (see 2.2.5. and 2.2.6.) — designed for children and adolescents who are physically or mentally handicapped and therefore cannot undergo normal education, but who are suited to an appropriate form of tuition. The most important aim of this special education scheme is to integrate the pupil firstly into the educational environment and secondly into society. The structure of the special education scheme is determined by eight types tailored to pupils' requirements. In addition, the scheme consists of four different forms of education. The eight types are related to four categories of disability as shown below:

Category	Type
I. Mentally handicapped	Slightly mentally handicapped Moderately and severely mentally handicapped
II. Behaviouraly handicapped	Behaviouraly handicapped
III. Physically handicapped	Physically handicapped Chronically ill
IV. Sensorally handicapped	Visually handicapped Auditory handicapped Speech difficulties and children with serious learning difficulties

The four different forms of education are as follows:

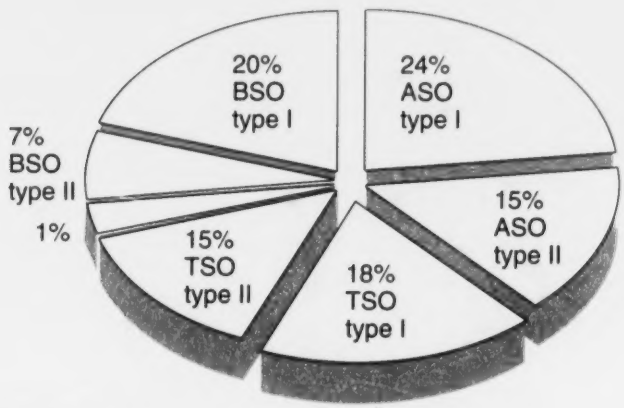
(i) social adaptation;
(ii) social adaptation and preparation for work;
(iii) special secondary education; and
(iv) special general, technical and art secondary education.

Only the last three forms lead to the world of work.

In the 1988/89 school year, there were 15 139 students enrolled in special secondary education in the Flemish community. In 1990/91 there were 13 834. In the French community (including the German-speaking community), there were 13 950 enrolled, compared with 13 324 in the 1990/91 school year.

2.2.14

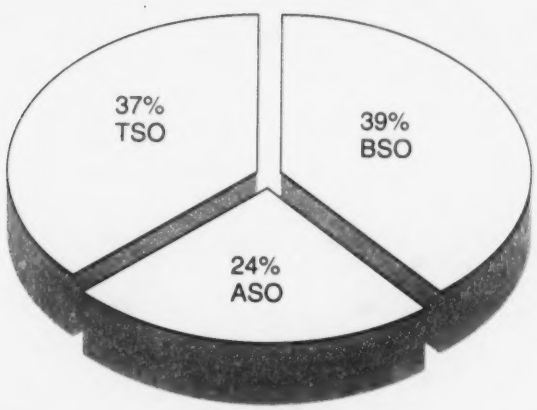
Proportion of 16-year-olds in the Flemish community in the 1989/90 school year



For abbreviations see Annex 1.

In addition, a further 1% of the number of 16-year-olds is distributed between apprenticeships* for the middle classes (0.3%), special secondary education (0.3%), secondary education with a limited curriculum (including industrial apprenticeships) (0.3%) and the uniform type (0.1%). In view of the low proportion of 16-year-olds, this 1% is not reflected in the pie chart.

Proportion of 16-year-olds in education in the French community, including the German-speaking community, in the 1989/90 school year



For abbreviations see Annex 1.

In the last chart, types I and II are aggregated, with the result that it is not as detailed as the first chart.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

2.2.15
The final level of education in Belgium is higher education, which consists, on the one hand, of university higher education and, on the other, of non-university higher education (HOBU).

Part-time compulsory education for 16- to 18-year-olds

2.2.16
Part-time compulsory education must comprise at least 360 hours a year if it is followed before the end of the school year in the year in which the pupil attains the age of 16 years. At least 240 hours a year are necessary if the training is followed between 1 July in the year in which the pupil attains 16 years of age and the end of the school year in the year when he becomes 18.

The Royal Decree of 16 July 1984, implementing the Law of 19 July 1971, authorizes the King to set up experimental forms of education in the sphere of lower and higher secondary vocational education. The Royal Decree covers experimental secondary education with a limited curriculum and was also adopted in the implementation of the Law of 29 June 1983 relating to compulsory education (Belgian Official Gazette, 6.7.1983).

The centres for part-time education may simply be full-time schools in which technical and/or vocational secondary training is organized. They are not separate schools but forms of tuition which are already provided in existing schools. Under the Dutch-speaking educational system, 48 centres have been constituted and recognized by the Minister (now the community Minister for Education). There are 40 for the French-speaking system and two for the German-speaking system. Such a centre will either provide instruction itself or will rely on other full-time schools or on schools with existing social advancement courses (see 2.4.2).

At the end of education with a limited curriculum, the student receives a certificate recording the date of commencement and termination of his or her studies and the skills obtained.

Possibilities for young people carrying out part-time compulsory education

2.2.17
There are a number of different possibilities for young people who carry out part-time compulsory education.

1. There is part-time compulsory education without work or without a middle classes contract. This is the case with 15- or 16-year-olds who have had at least two years' secondary education and opt, as regards the new school year, for part-time compulsory education.
2. Part-time compulsory education can also be combined with articles of apprenticeship under the auspices of training for the middle classes.
3. A further possibility is part-time compulsory education coupled with a part-time contract of employment or with a 'stages des jeunes' contract. This form of part-time compulsory education is attractive for young people and their employers, because importance is not only attached to alternating theory and

practice, but the employer's social security (RSZ/ONSS) contribution is also lower. The young people are bound by a proper contract of employment — and under the amending Law of 22 January 1985 the hours spent in education now also count as working time — or alternatively they are bound by a stages des jeunes contract.

4. Part-time compulsory education can also be combined with an industrial apprenticeship for the purposes of learning an occupation.
5. Finally, there is part-time compulsory education coupled with work as a self-employed person or as the assistant of a self-employed person.

There follows a description of apprenticeships for the middle classes (possibility 2) and industrial apprenticeships (possibility 4).

Apprenticeship for the middle classes

2.2.18

Apprenticeship for the middle classes applies both in the Flemish and the French communities. The institutions which are responsible for the organization of apprenticeship for the middle classes are the Vlaams Instituut voor Zelfstandig Ondernemen (VIZO — Flemish Institute for Self-employed Businesses) and the Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises (Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-sized Undertakings). By means of a method based on practice, it is intended to prepare young persons who have reached the age of 15 and have completed at least two years of secondary education with a full curriculum or young persons of 16 and upwards for business training and, at the same time, to give them the chance of involving themselves, as workers of a head of a firm, fully in an SMU (small or medium-sized undertaking). Training at the training centre (one to one and a half days a week) consists of 120 hours of firm-oriented and 120 hours of technical vocational training per year. In the case of 15-year-olds, the training time amounts to 360 hours a year (120 additional hours of firm-oriented training). For three and a half to four days a week, the apprentice does practical work with an employer.

2.2.19

The contract of apprenticeship containing the articles of apprenticeship is a contract of limited duration. It may also be a supervised apprenticeship (gecontroleerde leerverbintenis).* This is the case where the head of an undertaking wishes to give vocational training to an apprentice over whom he has authority as a parent or guardian. Articles of apprenticeship are concluded between the head of the undertaking and the apprentice through the intermediary of an apprenticeship secretary (leersecretaris).*

Articles of apprenticeship may be concluded for all occupations which are recognized by the High Council for the Middle Classes, that is occupations in the commercial, crafts, small industrial and intellectual services sectors.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

2.2.20
Practical experience with an established self-employed person is important. After continuous appraisal, the period of apprenticeship ends with an examination. The competent community minister determines the duration of the period of apprenticeship for each occupation or group of occupations, the minimum being one year and the maximum three. It is possible for the period to be extended or shortened, depending on requirements with regard to time spent in education, by decision of the minister.

In the case of articles of apprenticeship, the head of the undertaking must pay the apprentice a progressive, monthly minimum allowance. In 1991, a head of an undertaking paid an apprentice approximately BFR 7 000 per month for his or her services. The allowance varies depending on whether the articles come under the Flemish or the French community. The amount of the allowance is adjusted each year in line with the consumer price index and is valid for one calendar year.

In 1985, the number of articles of apprenticeship for the middle classes was approximately 9 850 in the case of the French community and around 770 for the German-speaking community. In 1989, the corresponding figures were approximately 8 900 for the French community and approximately 700 for the German-speaking community. In 1990, the number of articles of apprenticeship in the French community fell by more than 800, while the figure for the German-speaking community remained more or less constant.

In Flanders, the number of articles of apprenticeship for the middle classes stood at around 12 200 in 1985. It rose by 2% in 1989. Although in 1990 the figure declined to 10 200, VIZO still provides training and education for more than 10 000 apprentices.

The industrial apprenticeship system

2.2.21
The Law of 19 July 1983 (Belgian Official Gazette, 31.8.1983) on industrial apprenticeship contracts, which is also known as the industrial apprenticeship system (industrieel leerlingwezen)* for occupations carried out by young people in paid employment, had the objective of satisfying the education legislation by allowing young people to enter the service of undertakings in order to learn an occupation which is normally carried out by employed craftsmen. Since 1987, the industrial apprenticeship system has also applied to white-collar workers. This Law does not apply to businesses employing less than 50 workers in occupations for which articles of apprenticeship may be entered into on the conditions laid down in the regulations relating to continuing education for persons employed in small businesses (the middle classes). A draft Law was approved by the Senate in early July 1992 whereby businesses employing less than 50 workers will now be able to train young people under an industrial apprenticeship contract.

Industrial apprentices have the status of employees. The apprenticeship contract is concluded for a limited period and the employer undertakes to train the apprentice, as the other party to the contract, personally or to arrange for his training with a view to his carrying out an occupation. The apprenticeship contract was aimed initially at students who had completed primary education, were weary of school and were between 16 and 18 years of age. Apart from that, there are no educational or admittance requirements as regards diplomas. As from 1987, however, young people from 18 to 21 years of age may be taken on under the scheme.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

2.2.22
The duration of the apprenticeship and the way the week is divided between practical training and general and supplementary theoretical training are laid down by the King on a proposal by the competent joint[1] apprenticeship committee.

2.2.23
The apprenticeship contract must provide for a trial period of not less than one month and not more than three months. The competent joint apprenticeship committee determines the duration of the apprenticeship contract. The apprentice attends school for two days a week and works the other three in the firm or factory together with an experienced worker so that the young person may be trained to become a skilled worker. The duration may not be less than six months and may not exceed two years, except in the case of skilled occupations for which the joint apprenticeship committee stipulates a longer duration. It is possible to conclude several successive contracts with several undertakings where necessary in order to learn the occupation.

The employer undertakes the training of the apprentice personally or designates someone under his responsibility. The apprentice must be given the opportunity to attend the general and theoretical classes which are necessary for his training at a school or approved centre for part-time education.

The employer pays the apprentice an amount corresponding to a percentage of the minimum wage determined in accordance with the wage scale applicable in the relevant trade to which an employee with the skill which the apprentice intends to achieve is entitled to receive. Training under an industrial apprenticeship contract is better paid than an apprenticeship for the middle classes. The apprentice obtains a percentage of the normal wage in the sector in which he is employed. An industrial apprentice is regarded as an employee. At the end of the training, the employer presents the apprentice with a certificate showing the starting and finishing dates of the training and setting out the content of the programme.

The implementing and supervisory bodies and their power in the case of industrial apprenticeships

2.2.24
The enterprise council (conseil d'entreprise/ondernemingsraad)* is responsible at the level of the undertaking for ensuring that the apprenticeship contract, the training programmes and the provisions laid down by law and regulation applicable to apprenticeships are properly implemented. In carrying out this task, the enterprise council may call on the assistance of the chairman or secretary of the competent joint apprenticeship committee (paritair leercomité).* These joint apprenticeship committees are set up under the auspices of the joint committees (paritaire comités)* of the various branches of industry and of the National Labour Council.

The joint apprenticeship committees include representatives of employers and trade unions and of the Ministry of Labour and Employment and two representatives of the community Education Ministers.

The task of these joint apprenticeship committees is to draw up a model training programme for each occupation and to determine the duration of training. They

* See glossary, Annex 4.
[1] In this report 'joint' means equal representation of both sides of industry.

are also responsible for organizing the tests at the end of the apprenticeship period and for awarding the certificate of occupational competence. They also appraise the standard of training given to the apprentice and, within the limits set by the law, decide on individual amendments to the apprenticeship rules.

Each joint committee draws up a body of apprenticeship rules for undertakings which lay down the conditions and rules governing apprenticeships. Collective agreements concluded within the joint committees may provide that the financial costs of apprenticeship, with the exception of the operating costs of the joint committee which are borne by the State, are to be apportioned among those employers who, under the 1983 Law, are entitled to take on apprentices. The joint committees may entrust the collection of such contributions and the administration of the funds to existing social welfare funds.*

The system of industrial apprenticeships for young persons of 16 to 21 years of age often gives the impression that many persons take part in it. However, from the introduction of the system (1983) until 30 June 1990, only 1 757 contracts were concluded and on 30 June 1990 there were 674 young persons occupied in part-time learning/part-time work, distributed among 35 joint apprenticeship committees, mostly in undertakings. Figures for individual communities were not available. The low uptake is due to the following factors.

The industrial apprenticeship contract is organized on a sectoral basis in accordance with the absolute conditions laid down by the joint apprenticeship committees. The social partners have to agree to the conditions laid down by the joint committees in a particular sector with regard to training. In Belgium, only 15 of the 35 existing joint committees are in operation. In view of the minimal representation and limited operation (defective system and structure), many training possibilities are lost.

On the other hand, industrial apprenticeships have not been organized in a self-contained manner. Under the system of compulsory part-time education, lessons have to be taken at a centre for part-time education. As far as theory and general training are concerned, use must be made of a cumbersome educational structure in which, above all, starting up concrete new training is fraught with many difficulties.

Training measures and initiatives for young persons between 18 and 25 years of age

The Law on alternating training (former Royal Decree No 495: the employment/training contract)

2.2.25
Royal Decree No 495 (Belgian Official Gazette, 23.1.1987) on the employment/training contract promotes the training and employment of young workers between the ages of 18 and 25. *Per se*, this measure does not constitute a new system of training but is based on a temporary reduction in employers' contributions to national social security (RSZ/ONSS) in the case of employers who take on young job-seekers of 18 to 25 years of age, who at the same time work and undergo training.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

Two types of employment contracts specifically for alternating employment and training are concluded with young job-seekers of between 18 and 25 years of age: namely a contract of employment of indeterminate duration and a special employment/training contract.

2.2.26
Employment under the contract of employment must be on a half-time basis at least and annually may not exceed the contractual working hours of a full-time job less the duration of the training.

The type of training under the employment/training contract must belong to one of the following categories:

(i) courses held by centres which organize part-time education;

(ii) courses given in connection with social advancement education (onderwijs voor sociale promotie — OSP)* which are organized, subsidized or approved by the communities;

(iii) courses given in connection with education in the plastic arts with a limited curriculum,* known as part-time art education;

(iv) university-level courses of the long type with a full curriculum given in the evenings or at weekends in institutions of higher education;

(v) management training organized under regulations relating to training for the middle classes;

(vi) training governed by regulations on training for persons employed in agriculture;

(vii) industrial training organized by decision of the competent joint committee and approved by the VDAB and the FOREM;

(viii) training organized or recognized by the VDAB and the FOREM.

2.2.27
The duration of the training may not be less than one year or more than three years. Except in the case of management training as part of continuous training for the middle classes, where the minimum duration is 256 hours per year, the minimum total duration of the training is 500 hours per year.

2.2.28
An employee who is taken on under the system of alternating employment and training must, at the time when he starts work, be seeking work and be more than 18 and less than 25 years of age. The young person may not be the holder of a university degree, a diploma of higher education of the long or the short type or of a certificate of higher secondary technical education. Neither may the young person already have carried out one or more employment/training contracts for a period of three years or more as a result of an extension of the employment/training contract due to suspension. He may not receive paid educational leave for the training (see 2.4.16).

The employer qualifies for reduced national social security contributions for the duration of the employment/training contract only, and the maximum duration of such a contract is three years. The reduction ceases in any event when the young person reaches the age of 25, although the reduced social security contribution may still apply for the whole of the quarter in which the young person attained that age.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

From the time when Royal Decree No 495 was first implemented in the Flemish region in 1987 until 30 June 1990, 842 employment/training contracts were concluded by 380 women and 462 men. Employment/training contracts are generally concluded at 18 or 19 years of age in that region. More 19-year-old women (132) than 19-year-old men (110) concluded employment/training contracts in the Flemish region.

2.2.29
In the Walloon region, 433 employment/training contracts were concluded between 1987 and 30 June 1990 by 151 women and 282 men. Employment/training contracts are generally concluded at 19 or 20 years of age in this region.

2.2.30
Lastly, in the Brussels region, 162 employment/training contracts were concluded up until 30 June 1990 by only 24 women and 138 men. As in the Walloon region, employment/training contracts are generally concluded at 19 or 20 years of age. Above all, a lack of familiarity with the employment/training contract and its defective support and organization, together with the reasons mentioned for the industrial apprenticeship contract (see 2.2.21), explain why uptake has remained low in this case too.

Stages des jeunes (Royal Decree No 230)

2.2.31
In this part of the monograph, stages des jeunes (work experience schemes) (Royal Decree of 21 December 1983, Belgian Official Gazette, 28. 12. 1983) will be discussed very briefly because they tend to be regarded as an employment measure.

Rising unemployment, above all among young people who had finished their education, prompted the legislature, as from 1975, to take measures with a view to combating such unemployment among young people. A scheme was devised under which employers were required to take on a number of *stagiaires*. Job-seekers — irrespective of their level of education — who are under the age of thirty at the time of their application for a *stage* and who have never had a job for more than six months may serve a *stage* in a public administrative service or firm. The duration of the *stage* is one year in public administration or six months in a private establishment. The *stage* in a firm can be extended by six months.

The aim of the *stage* is to secure practical training as a bridge between the education which has been received and the intended employment. A second *stage* is possible if the person concerned has been completely unemployed and entitled to benefits for at least two years since the first *stage*. In 1990, the average number of *stagiaires* came to 24 905 in the private sector and to 9 465 in the public sector. The average number of *stagiaires* was higher in 1989: 25 303 in the private sector and 10 748 in the public sector. No breakdown was available by community or region.

CEDEFOP

Specific initiatives in the French community

A — Entreprises d'apprentissage professionnel (EAPs)

2.2.32
The legislation relating to EAPs (vocational training enterprises) formally recognizes existing initiatives for underprivileged young people. As a result of the Decree of the French Community Executive of 23 January 1987 (Belgian Official Gazette, 24.1.1987), this form of alternating training has been cast into a legislative framework.

2.2.33
The institutions which may organize such tuition or training carry out important work in a number of respects: they protect young people by keeping them occupied, thereby keeping boredom and street crime in check, and provide them with vocational training (social dimension or integration into the world of work). EAPs are representative of all the characteristics of an undertaking, primarily in the secondary sector, but subject to the proviso that there is no aim of making a profit (economic dimension). In addition, they teach the young people skills (teaching dimension).

The EAPs are funded by the French community and by the European Social Fund (ESF) in respect of the tuition and training they provide.

2.2.34
The characteristic feature of EAPs in comparison with other forms of alternating training is the target group: underprivileged young people or young people behind with their education and/or with their vocational training. More specifically, the target group is young people between the ages of 18 and 25 who, although involuntary unemployed, have no entitlement to unemployment benefit and who do not qualify for a vocational training place at the FOREM. Royal Decree No 499 introduced a specific, advantageous social security scheme for marginalized, underprivileged young people employed by non-profit-making associations. The exemption from employers' contributions for non-profit-making associations granted by the competent authority relates to sickness and invalidity benefits and family allowances.

Many non-profit-making associations work together with public centres for social welfare (centres publics d'aide sociale — CPAS/openbare centra voor maatschappelijk welzijn — OCMWs) from which young people are often recruited. This cooperation is based on the organic Law on CPASs/OCMWs (1976) under which it is provided that CPASs/OCMWs may temporarily employ people at the minimum subsistence level with a view to their reintegration into the social security system. The young people can be given a six-month employment contract which will then entitle them to unemployment benefits. The CPASs/OCMWs, in their capacity as employers, do not necessarily have to employ the young people at minimum subsistence level themselves. They may also obtain them from non-profit-making associations, who bear the responsibility for employing, teaching and training them.

The social costs of the CPASs/OCMWs may possibly be reduced, since the State will pay 50% of the wages of persons at minimum subsistence level who are employed in an EAP.

2.2.35
Nevertheless, the CPASs/OCMWs are not the only partners of the EAPs. In the sphere of training, some EAPs which are non-profit-making associations work together with schools, PMS centres, centres for part-time education, centres for the training of the middle classes and the regional offices of the FOREM.

2.2.36
The number of underprivileged young people in these training enterprises is steadily rising. In 10 years, mainly in the Brussels region, the number of underprivileged young people under 30 has risen by 10%. The lack of an exact follow-up to this statistical material means that it is impossible to give an accurate figure for the absolute numbers of underprivileged young people recorded. Certainly, the overall number of underprivileged young people who have used the EAPs since 1987 is estimated at around 1 000. In the last four years (1988-91) the number of underprivileged young people using the EAPs has risen by an average of about 6%. In the French community, this type of alternating training accounts for most of the young people, after articles of apprenticeship for the middle classes.

B — Actions intégrées de développement (AIDs)

2.2.37
In the French community, there are also integrated development activities (actions intégrées de développement). They were set up by the Centre for Information and Popular Education in the context of the Christian trade union movement in conjunction with local partners. Like the EAPs, the AIDs have not had the low degree of success of other non-school initiatives (e.g. industrial apprenticeships; Royal Decree No 495 on employment/training contracts). In any event, the target group is different. The idea was that there should be a system of partnership or contractual collaboration between various associations, employers and trade unions, on the one hand, and public services, on the other. In fact, AIDs are modelled on the same pattern as the EAPs — the field is the same — but in the case of the AIDs there is rather a strong leaning towards the public sector.

The difference between the EAPs and the AIDs lies in the organizing authorities. The EAPs' origins are in the social sector (in particular, protection of young people). The AIDs, for their part, were set up by the Centre for Information and Popular Education within the Christian trade-union movement. However, the target group of the AIDs is the same as that of the EAPs. At present, there are about 13 integration projects spread over the whole of Wallonia and Brussels and covering each year 400 to 500 young people of between 18 and 25 years of age who are not entitled to unemployment benefit.

Statistics aggregating the results for 1988 and 1989 show that the average success rate for integrating young people into working life is around 54%. This means that, of the 54 of every 100 young people who leave the AIDs after a number of months, 46 obtain a contract in an undertaking and eight enrol for vocational training with FOREM for occupations in the secondary sector.

2.2.38
Pursuant to the Decree of 23 January 1987 on integration into working life and cooperation with the FOREM, the AIDs are subsidized by the French community. The AIDs receive subsidies from the Walloon and Brussels regions and from the European Social Fund in connection with their employment measures.

CEDEFOP

Vocational guidance

2.2.39
Belgium was one of the first European countries to set up a vocational guidance service (in 1909). Initially, it consisted of consultations for handicapped children on employment possibilities. The first real vocational guidance service developed in 1919 into the Intermunicipal Service for Information about Job Opportunities of the Greater Brussels area. This was followed by initiatives by various authorities involved in vocational training, such as schools, youth organizations, employers' associations and trade unions, placement services, etc.

The National Centre for Vocational Guidance was set up by Royal Decree in 1936 under the Department of Public Education (now the Ministry of Education). It provided only for a medical and psychological examination specifically for young people and geared to their future choice of occupation. The Centre also dealt with subsidies for municipal, provincial and independent initiatives.

Because of necessity and the involvement of the world of education, the existing services evolved into educational and vocational guidance services, with the emphasis being shifted to guidance at the end of primary education. As a result of the growing number of students in secondary education, a need arose for differently structured services with more stress placed on educational guidance and student counselling.

2.2.40
Centres for educational and vocational guidance were set up just after the Second World War by the General Christian Employers' Association. These were the precursors of the PMS (psychological, medical and social) centres set up as from 1960. As their name suggests, the aim of the PMS centres is to afford students, on the basis of a psychological, medical and social approach, the greatest chance of developing their personality to the full and to come up with the most appropriate choice of studies.

2.2.41
The PMS centres are under a duty to consider all individual questions with regard to educational and vocational opportunities which are put by parents or students. Each PMS centre has to serve a number of schools in its region. Whenever a student enrols for the first time in an educational establishment within their area of operations, the PMS centres have to take note of all the available information which is necessary for the purposes of their guidance activities. Whenever a school finds that a student is impeded in his or her studies for one reason or another, it can always appeal to a PMS centre in order to ascertain the causes and to take remedial action jointly.

Each PMS centre has at least the following staff attached to it:

(i) a director (psychologist or educationalist);
(ii) a psychological/pedagogical adviser;
(iii) a social worker;
(iv) a nurse; and
(v) a part-time medical officer (paid on an hourly basis for his services).

Understandably, the PMS centres play an important role in the movement of students from primary to secondary and from secondary to higher education. After that, the bulk of their attention is devoted to children in vocational education, immigrants' children and also, since the extension of compulsory education to the age of 18, to students in part-time education.

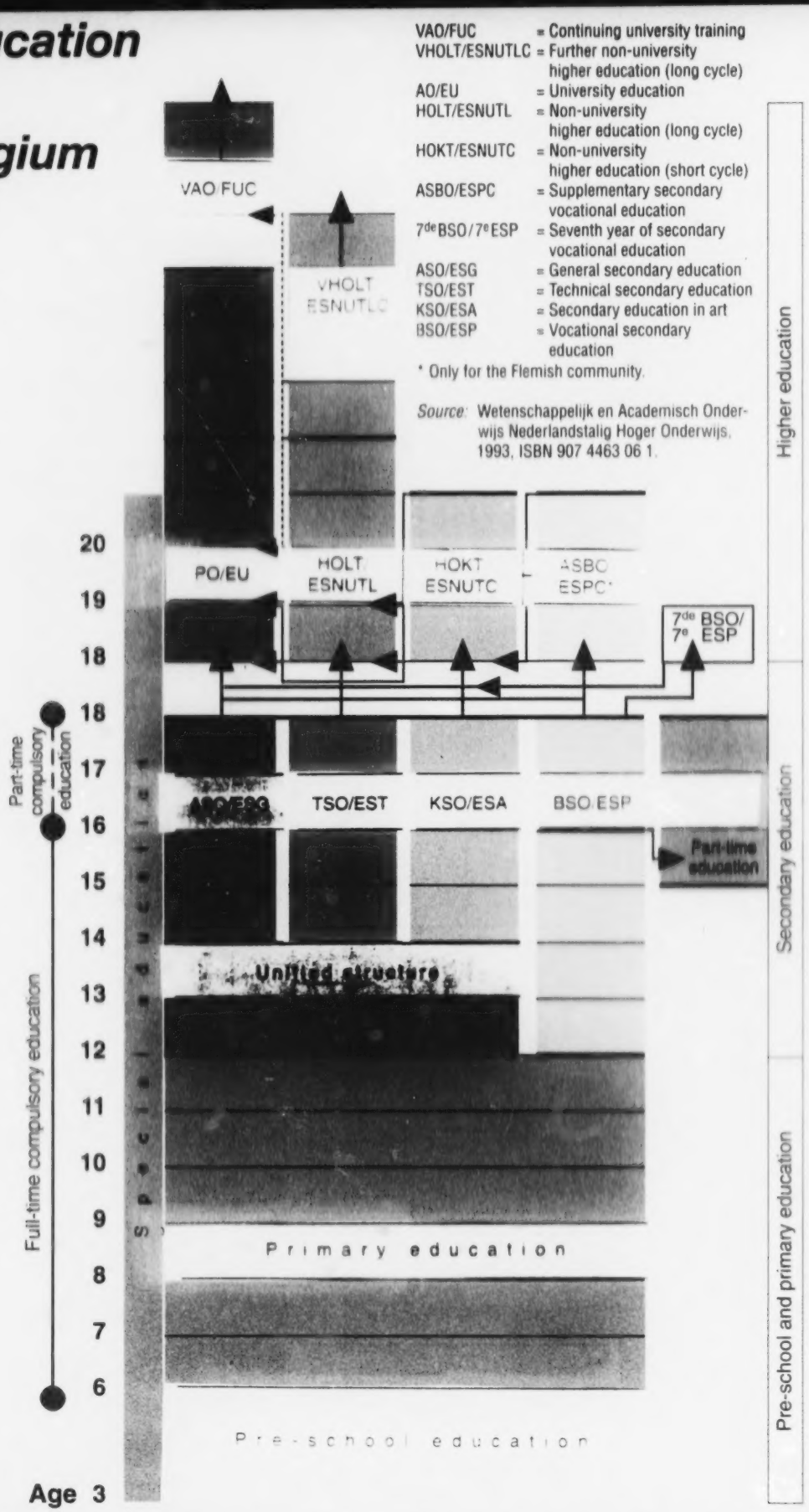
2.2.42
The work of the PMS centres is primarily directed towards counselling young people in their choice of studies. The centres have never been much involved in actual vocational guidance. Certainly, all kinds of information and documentation concerning the relationship between education and work has been, and still is, made available to students (educational grants, educational courses, descriptions of occupations, referral to other training possibilities and placement services, etc.).

2.2.43
In addition to educational guidance by the PMS centres, in reformed secondary education there is counselling and remedial assistance for children with all kinds of difficulties. There are also tendencies to do more by way of family counselling.

2.2.44
Since the Royal Decree of 13 August 1962 was outdated in comparison with the rules governing the organization of the PMS centres (the Organiek Statuut), the Royal Decree of 24 August 1981 reformed PMS work by introducing a new model for its operations. This Royal Decree on the generalization of PMS counselling from the child in nursery school to the student in non-university higher education also constituted an attempt to address issues connected with information and advice on educational, training and job opportunities for all interested persons. In the last 10 years, it has been given a different slant, namely the promotion of harmonious overall personal development.

2.2.45
As a result of the present socioeconomic circumstances and the increasing pace of technological change, there is a large amount of information which is constantly subject to rapid change, and hence the provision of advice on education, training and job opportunities is not always an easy task for the PMS centres.

Education in Belgium



This graphic and the following one present a simplified picture of the education system, in which the differences between the linguistic communities are not fully reflected.

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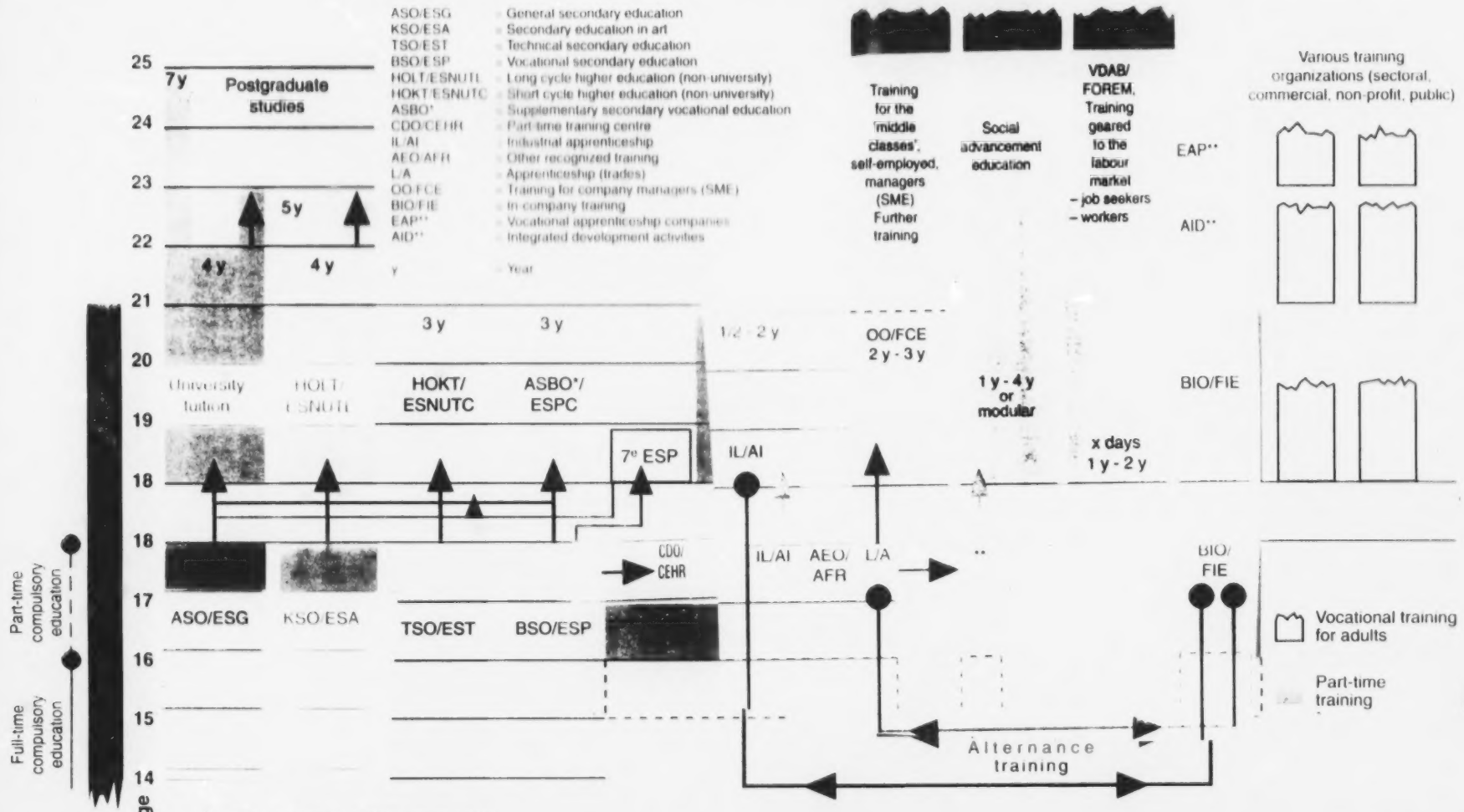
Education and vocational training in Belgium



* Only for the Flemish community.

** Only for the French and German-speaking communities.

Source: F. Geers, VDAB

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2.3. Higher education and teacher training

Introduction

2.3.1

For young people who wish to continue their training in the education system after secondary education (as from the age of 18), higher education — the highest level of education in Belgium — affords a broad spectrum of possibilities which, after two to seven years, lead to officially recognized vocational qualifications giving access to the employment market. In addition to university education, there is non-university higher education (HOBU), in which there is a distinction drawn between higher education of the long type or university-level higher education and higher education of the short type.

The level of participation in higher education in Belgium is very high: 32% of 20- to 24-year-olds attend one form or another of higher education. If 18- to 19-year-olds are included — this being the age at which young people can commence higher education — Belgium goes so far as to reach a proportion of 50% in higher education.

The following table, based on OECD statistics, indicates the number of students per 1 000 of age-group who obtained a higher secondary education diploma and seek to commence higher education.

Proportion concerned per 1 000 of age-group obtaining secondary qualifications and entering higher education

	Obtaining secondary qualifications 1987/88	**Entering higher education**	**Obtaining secondary qualifications 1988/89**	**Entering higher education**
B	**510**	**493**	**510[2]**	**493[2]**
DK	713	434	759	477[5]
D	284[1]	296[1]	284[1]	320[5]
GR	485[1]	328[1]	485[1]	328[1]
E	353	347	353[3]	384
F	340	344	367	442
IRL	—	288[1,2]	766[6]	325[3]
I	357	269	357[3]	269[2]
L	—	—	532	—
NL	527	394	519	360
P	—	—	—	—
UK	366[4]	347	398[4]	374

Source: OECD in figures, 1991 and 1992 editions.

1 1986/87.
2 1987/88.
3 Full-time only.
4 School-leavers with at least five A-C GCE O-levels or equivalent (i.e. general or business and Technical Educational Council certificate and diploma are considered eligible for higher education).
5 Includes new entrants in postgraduate programmes.
6 Includes all students sitting the upper secondary exam. Entrance to higher education is based on performance in the leaving certificate.

Non-university higher education (HOBU)

2.3.2
Non-university higher education covers eight categories, each covering various specializations. These eight categories are:

(i) technical higher education;
(ii) economics higher education;
(iii) agricultural higher education;
(iv) paramedical higher education;
(v) social higher education;
(vi) artistic higher education;
(vii) higher education for teaching;
(viii) maritime higher education.

Some of these categories cover training of both the long and the short types.

In the case of the short type (two to three years), the training tends to be academic/technical and directed towards a vocational qualification. The long type (two cycles of at least two years each) provides, during the first cycle, multidisciplinary and general/academic training and, during the second cycle, more specialized training, at the end of which the student has to submit and defend a dissertation. There is also the possibility of attending higher art education, where there are various departments awarding special diplomas.

2.3.3
The upward trend shown by non-university higher education over 10 years is illustrated in the following table.

Community	**School year**			
	1980/81	**1984/85**	**1988/89**	**1990/91**
Flanders	58 772	69 402	79 721	82 149
French community (including German community)	43 296	46 371	50 542	55 030
Total	101 168	115 773	130 263	137 179

Source: Flemish community, Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community, statistical yearbooks, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1991.

In the Flemish community, higher education of the short type (HOKT) accounts for about 65% of all high-school students not attending university. In the French community, higher education of the short type accounts for about 68% of total high-school students in non-university higher education.

CEDEFOP

Access to higher education

2.3.4

Access to higher education of the short or long type and to university education is conditional on possession of a validated certificate* of higher secondary education. Since institutions offering higher education of the long type are 'university level', the same conditions apply to them as apply to access to university education (this now applies only to the French community, since the Decree of 12 June 1991 on the Flemish universities has abolished those conditions; this Decree also replaced the term 'university education' with 'academic education'). University education, whose function is the conservation, propagation and development of science, requires potential students to have a certificate giving access to higher education.

The Central Examination Board* (now known as the Examination Board of the Communities)

2.3.5

This certificate is awarded in the case of traditional secondary education by the Conseil de classe/Klasseraad (board of teachers) and in the case of reformed secondary education by the teaching staff of the school. The certificate may also be awarded by the State Central Examination Board (CEC)* (this, also, now only applies in the French community). The Diploma of General Secondary Education can also be awarded by the Central Examination Board of the Communities, which is made up of teachers from various schools from various education networks.

The certificates awarded in university education fall into the categories of legal or academic certificates. Pursuant to the Decree on universities in the Flemish community, the former distinction between university degrees consisting of a legal or an academic certificate has been abolished, but the distinction still exists for the time being in the French community.

This means that in Flanders all academic certificates can be awarded after study at a university by a central examination board (or by the Examination Board of the Flemish community, consisting of university teachers in accordance with requirements laid down by law).

* See glossary, Annex 4.

University education

2.3.6
Each cycle of university studies terminates with the award of a certificate: 'kandidaat' after two to three years' basic study and 'licentiaat' after a further two to three years' specialized study and, in the case of most specializations, subject to the submission of a dissertation. The first cycle lasts longer in the case of medicine (three years instead of two) and for some specializations the second cycle may be longer (three or four years).

2.3.7

University education in Belgium

Community	School year			
	1980/81	1984/85	1988/89	1990/91
Flanders	47 331	52 536	53 069	56 904
French community (including German community)	47 915	49 818	52 394	54 941
Total	95 246	102 354	105 463	111 845

Source: Flemish community, Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community, statistical yearbooks, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1991.

Over a 10-year period, university attendance has risen at an average rate of about 16%.

2.3.8
To an ever-increasing extent, the universities are also organizing postgraduate studies. These postgraduate studies (two years) lead to the award of either a supplementary degree in addition to the qualification already obtained, or a diploma or certificate. This is plainly a new market both for recent graduates and for adults who have been working for years. This also implies that a number of branches of study no longer prepare students sufficiently for new employment sectors, thus making additional study necessary. Thus, philology graduates and pharmacists, for example, often study for an additional year in preparation for the world of work.

2.3.9
In the first half of the 1980s, students who had been unemployed for two years could study for an additional year in this way and avoid having to register at the employment exchange. Surveys conducted at the University of Ghent show that in 26% of cases the second diploma was the decisive factor in finding a job.

2.3.10
Some of the many postgraduate courses are also open to students from non-university higher education. In this way, a number of special degrees may be taken by students who have completed education of the long type. These special degrees are degrees (two to three years' duration) which, subject to taking just one 'kandidatuur' (one year), may be obtained at a university. Thus, for example, industrial engineers (four years' study) can be admitted to the last three years of civil engineering (five years' study in total) provided that they pass just one kandidatuur.

Lower secondary school teachers (regenten) and nurses may also take a special degree in social sciences (two years' duration), provided that they pass just one kandidatuur. In some courses, the universities likewise offer working students the possibility of attending lectures in the evening or at weekends, so as to allow adults, also, to obtain a university qualification.

The training of trainers

2.3.11
In Belgium, teacher training forms part of higher education. The training qualifies people to teach in primary and secondary schools. There are three different levels of training and types of education: university training; teacher training provided by higher education for teaching of the short type and teacher training provided by higher education for teaching for social advancement.

2.3.12
University students can obtain a supplementary diploma as part of their programme of study which will enable them to teach subjects related to their degree subject (licentiaat). It is possible to attend lectures for that supplementary diploma — the 'aggregaatsdiploma' — during the last two or three years leading up to the degree or after obtaining the licentiaat diploma. The aggregaatsdiploma can only be obtained after the licentiaat diploma. An aggregatsdiploma entitles one to teach in higher secondary education and in high schools (hoge scholen). The period of study for an aggregaatsdiploma is one year. The training of teachers in higher education for teaching of the short type lasts three years. Both general and teacher-training courses are given.

In the final year, the trainee teachers take part in teaching practice in various schools. Higher education for teaching of the short type qualifies students to teach in nursery schools (nursery school teachers), in primary education (primary school teachers) and in lower secondary education (regenten).

The teacher training regarding social advancement is concerned with practical training in a particular occupational or technical sector. For this type of training, there is no full-time curriculum. It is open to both men and women and is provided by means of evening and weekend courses. The training is theoretical as well as practical. It is possible to become a vocational training teacher in various ways. The minimum qualification is a diploma of lower secondary technical education. Exceptionally, even experts without a diploma may attend the courses, provided they have the requisite experience (nine years). After a few years of evening or

weekend courses, it is possible to obtain the requisite D diploma or Certificate of Aptitude for Teaching (GPB). Depending on the diploma held and on the level at which one is to teach, a number of years of experience in industry are also required.

2.3.13
The VDAB and the FOREM make their own provision for the training of their instructors. This training is given by the Centrum voor Pedagogische Opleiding en Studie (CPOS — Centre for Trainer Training and Study) in the case of the VDAB and by Pédagogie-recherche-développement centre (PRD — Trainer Training Research and Development Centre) in the case of the FOREM. Both centres provide trainer training and tuition.

2.3.14
For the French community, a scientific study committee has been set up on the initiative of the Minister for Education and Scientific Research with a view to reforming teacher training. It is a long-term plan involving both institutional changes and changes in status. The most important change will be the introduction of standardized training from primary education to higher secondary education. In the interests of harmonization between the levels of education, one type of teacher training will be provided for the 3- to 8-year-old age-group and one for 8- to 13-year-olds. It is proposed that training for teaching the 13- to 18-year-old age-group should include thorough psychological/pedagogical training for graduates.

2.4. Training for adults

Introduction

2.4.1
In Belgium the expression 'vocational training for adults' generally embraces three training systems: social advancement education, labour-market-oriented vocational training provided by the VDAB and the FOREM and training for the middle classes. Each of the three systems has its own profile, even if in certain cases they overlap in terms of their content and target group. Collaboration and coordination are getting into their stride slowly, since these systems have differed institutionally for a long time and their policy lines are determined by different policy-makers.

The description of these training agencies is followed by a brief account of other partial systems and initiatives of the fragmented training on offer for adults: agricultural training, training in the armed forces, training for civil servants, training for handicapped persons, in-firm training, sectoral initiatives, training by private institutions and public authorities, and distance learning.

Social advancement education*

2.4.2
Evening and weekend education for adults, now known as social advancement education (onderwijs voor sociale promotie — OSP/EPS), is as old as formal education. Until 1970, evening and weekend courses were also known as 'part-time education'* or education lasting not more than 28 course-hours per week. In 1970, this type of education was rechristened social advancement education. The legislature's aim in renaming this type of education in 1970 was to accommodate people who for various reasons could not obtain what they wanted (vertical advancement) in full-time education and people — in professional life or in industry — who had completed their studies and wished to acquire a specialization or new technology within the shortest possible time-scale (horizontal advancement).

2.4.3
The aim of vertical advancement in the context of social advancement education is to obtain a diploma (certificate of vocational secondary education) or a qualification of a higher level than that which the student already possesses. Diplomas may be obtained for the secondary level of technical and vocational education and for the higher level (higher education of the short type) and for supplementary secondary vocational education.

2.4.4
The possibility of horizontal advancement entailed the introduction of a new type of training (at secondary level), namely short training. Before, only long training courses existed (two years or longer). Everyone who now opts for long training has vertical advancement in mind, while all who opt for short training can pursue only horizontal advancement.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

2.4.5
The change of name and the introduction of short training courses were not accompanied by a change of structure for adult education; the legal basis of 1957 and the organizational structure of 1966 remained unchanged. Only the objectives, not the content, were changed in 1970. As a result, social advancement education still comes under legislation on part-time education. As far as its structure and organization are concerned, adult education is still a replica of full-time education.

2.4.6
Higher education for social advancement is in a similar situation: the legislation on such education goes back to a Law of 1962 on higher technical education. The organization of higher social advancement education was, however, brought into line with the general structure of higher education in 1970. In the same year, the language courses were given a new structure. Language sections were divided into three levels: elementary knowledge (one or two years), practical knowledge (two or three years) and advanced knowledge (two or three years); and provision was also made for accelerated training (fewer lessons over a shorter period).

2.4.7
In 1979, social advancement education introduced the modular system with credit units (kapitaliseerbare eenheden)* on an experimental basis. This system was introduced generally as from 1983 and is an educational alternative to the traditional subject/year system. In place of the traditional subjects and syllabuses organized on an annual basis, there is modular training based on teaching packages or modules which constitute meaningful and coherent units of knowledge and professional skills of a particular level. A module generally covers half a year. This modular system, which has been tried out on an experimental basis since 1979, was adopted in 1983. The aim is to provide both forms of basic training and forms of retraining in order to cater for differing needs. Fostering integration into life in society also plays a role.

2.4.8
As far as the French community is concerned, a Decree of 16 April 1991 (Belgian Official Gazette, 25. 6. 1991), has amended the education legislation with respect to social advancement education. The most important changes are that it brings in equality of certificates as between social advancement education and initial day education and the coordination of day and evening classes through the introduction of training units enabling one to switch from one system to the other. The Decree also provides for definitive rules for part-time education. Young people already enrolled in part-time education at the age of 15 may further avail themselves of that possibility until they reach the age of 25.

2.4.9
The target group of social advancement education is very wide. The number of enrolments is therefore also very high. Thus, in the Flemish community in the 1988/89 academic year there were 135 432 persons enrolled, with language courses (58 168) and lower secondary vocational courses (33 848) accounting for the highest number of enrolments. In the 1990/91 school year the number of enrolments in secondary education came to 128 345, representing a drop of 5.5% compared with 1988/89.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

2.4.10
In the French community (including the German-language community), the number of enrolments for the 1988/89 school year came to 123 722, with higher secondary technical education (39 741) being followed by lower secondary vocational education (34 174 enrolments). In the 1990/91 school year, enrolments in secondary education came to 117 561 (a decrease of 5% compared with the 1988/89 school year).

2.4.11
In the case of secondary social advancement education, the average duration of the various courses which can be followed is 6.79 hours a week. In the case of higher social advancement education, the figure is 10.4 hours a week.

2.4.12
Admittedly, the drop-out rate within a given school year is high. In the Flemish community, about 20.6% of all students enrolled on secondary education courses drop out before the beginning of the examination period. The drop-out rate is 17.6% in the case of higher social advancement education. No figures or estimates are available for the drop-out rate in the French community.

Four reasons are given for drop-outs in the Flemish community. In secondary education, 20.5% of the students who give up do so partly for educational reasons (subject too difficult, level too low, etc.); 17.1% found themselves unfitted for the course; 42.3% cited the effect of their work situation and 20% of drop-outs from secondary education referred to their personal situation.

In higher social advancement education, 13.7% mentioned educational reasons, 16.4% personal unsuitability, 42.6% their work situation and 27.3% their personal situation.

2.4.13
Through the trade unions, employers' associations and the subregional employment committees (STCs — subregionaal tewerkstellingscomités)* social advancement education can have more contact with the demand side of the employment market, since Royal Decree No 461 of 17 September 1986 has made it possible to set up new sections and to remodel or restructure existing sections. Planning requests are made via the STCs, whose tasks include bringing about and promoting consultation between employers, employees and the education and vocational training systems at the subregional level. The STCs have powers to carry out research, give advice and make recommendations with regard to employment and vocational training, and the public authorities, employers and employees are represented on them. When social advancement education succeeds in getting a favourable STC opinion on an application for a new course, it gets a favourable ratio (10 students per study year instead of 15 without the STC opinion).

2.4.14
In order to bring an end to the excessive fragmentation of the present social advancement education on offer, there is a call within the system for regional cooperation between educational institutions with more decision-making powers over the use of public funds for social advancement education in the region.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

2.4.15
Before discussing other forms of education and training for adults, it is interesting to take a closer look at legislation on paid educational leave for adult workers in the private sector, an area in which there is an increasingly strong tendency to put a broad construction on vocationally oriented training.

Paid educational leave (BEV)

2.4.16
The amending Law of 22 January 1985 (Belgian Official Gazette, 24. 1. 1985) deals with paid educational leave (BEV — betaald educatief verlof). BEV replaces the former system of credit hours, which, for various reasons, no longer worked effectively.

For instance, the traditional evening classes increasingly accorded less and less with the needs of trade and industry or with the factors motivating the workers themselves. What is more, the employers were faced with a *fait accompli*. They not only had to cope with the absence of their employees who were undergoing training, but they were also under an obligation to part-fund the operation. Educational leave was introduced with the aim of fostering efforts with regard to the training of full-time workers in the private sector by offering them the possibility of maintaining their salaries while taking time off work in order to attend courses. Paid educational leave is therefore applicable to all workers in the private sector who are in full-time employment and are bound by one or more contracts of employment.

Paid educational leave is granted in order to take part in vocational training or general education. The training chosen must consist of at least 40 sessions and must be specified in the Law or approved by the joint approval committee* set up for this purpose by the Ministry of Employment and Labour.

2.4.17
Due to paid educational leave, it is possible to take one of a number of vocational training courses:

(i) social advancement education for courses of the short type;
(ii) courses with a full curriculum given in the evening or at weekends in higher education institutions;
(iii) training for the middle classes, namely
  — management training,
  — supplementary training,
  — occupational redeployment training and retraining;
(iv) university-level courses of the long type with a full curriculum which are also given in the evening or at weekends at higher education institutions;
(v) sectoral training organized by decision of the joint committee.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

Vocational training organized by the VDAB or the FOREM falls outside its scope. The scope of the Law expressly covers courses organized by social advancement education.

2.4.18
In addition to vocational training, it is also possible to use paid educational leave in order to attend general training courses. An example of such general courses is those organized by representative trade unions.

2.4.19
The legislature thereby recognizes the jurisdiction of the Education Ministries with regard to training in the sphere of vocational training for workers. Other training institutions are to be recognized. Recognition is a matter for the Ministry of Employment and Labour, which, moreover, administers the funds into which undertakings pay their contributions towards the remuneration of entitled students. Paid educational leave is paid by the employer, who, subject to a wage ceiling of approximately BFR 62 000 a month gross, can obtain reimbursement from the Ministry of Employment and Labour.

The employee can remain away from work for the duration of the training. The duration of the training is limited to 240 hours per academic year in the case of vocational training, 160 hours in the case of general training and 240 hours in the event that the employee attends both vocational and general training in the course of the same year.

2.4.20
From the time when the employee submits his application for paid educational leave to the time when training ends, the employer may not dismiss the employee, except for reasons not connected with the application for paid educational leave (e.g. theft etc.). This protection is suspended if the employee forfeits the right to paid educational leave by taking up gainful employment or by interrupting the normal course of the studies.

2.4.21
The number of persons held to be entitled to paid educational leave in the 1987/88 academic year came to 25 490, of whom 20 414 opted for vocational training and 5 076 for general training. In the case of both vocational training and general training, Dutch speakers account for a higher share (12 440 in the case of vocational training and 2 995 in the case of general training) than French and German speakers combined (8 370 in the case of vocational training and 2 081 in the case of general training).

In the 1988/89 academic year, fewer people took paid educational leave, namely 25 303. Of the 25 303, 20 312 undertook vocational training, 12 780 on the Flemish side and 7 532 on the French-speaking side (including German speakers), while 2 845 Flemings and 2 146 French speakers (including German speakers) attended general training.

In the 1990/91 academic year, the uptake fell further to 20 280, 16 200 of them opting for vocational training (approximately 11 000 on the Flemish side and approximately 5 200 French (and German) speakers) and 4 080 for general training (about 2 500 French (and German) speakers and around 1 600 Flemings).

Consequently, in the case of general training, the proportion of French speakers has risen compared with that of Dutch speakers. The latter figures are partial only, since three years may elapse between an application for paid educational leave and actually taking a course.

Therefore, in the 1990/91 academic year 20 333 training courses were taken, 47% of which were accounted for by French (and German) speakers. No figures are available showing the breakdown between vocational and general training.

2.4.22
According to computerized data from the Ministry of Employment and Labour, the number of courses used in the various training systems in the 1990/91 academic year was also higher in the case of Dutch speakers than in the case of French (and German) speakers. This is illustrated in the following table.

	French speakers	**Dutch speakers**
Social advancement	5 467	6 147
Visual arts (restricted syllabus)	77	146
University — higher secondary	129	58
University — first and second cycles	150	13
Middle classes	458	1 100
Agriculture	2	15
Central Examination Board	10	15
Sectoral training	770	1 684
Courses approved by the approval committee	156	853
Officially recognized courses	2 346	745
Total	**9 565**	**10 776**

Source: Ministère de l'emploi et du travail, congé education paye (Annual reports — school year 1990/91.

Vocational training and guidance provided by the VDAB and the FOREM

Vocational training

2.4.23

Vocational training for adults became available as long ago as 1945 in connection with the development of social security. At that time, the Provisional Aid Fund for Involuntarily Unemployed Persons (Voorlopig Steunfonds voor Onvrijwillig Werklozen (VSOW)/Fonds provisoire des chômeurs involontaires (no official French abbreviation)), which was to become the RVA/ONEM, the present-day VDAB and FOREM, was given the task of organizing vocational training for adults. Vocational training can consist of learning the basic features of a trade, retraining in that trade, supplementary training, extending or updating occupational know-how, or acquiring basic training.

2.4.24

The VDAB and the FOREM have the same organizational form. They have:

(i) vocational training centres set up and managed by them;

(ii) centres set up in collaboration with industry;

(iii) approved centres — under which the centres for trainer training and research come (see 2.3.11: 'The training of trainers'); and

(iv) centres which provide individual training.

- *Vocational training centres* are organized by the VBAB and the FOREM completely out of their own funds with the participation of third parties. Where third parties collaborate in the organization of vocational training centres, the costs are shared among the contracting parties.

- *Centres set up in collaboration with industry* are centres by means of which the VDAB and the FOREM aid training in collaboration with undertakings wishing to organize collective, technical training for their employees. The training must take place systematically in accordance with an approved programme and principally outside normal production.

- *Approved centres* are centres set up on the initiative of undertakings or public or private associations. They are approved at the proposal of the management boards of the VDAB and the FOREM and after consulting the competent subregional employment committee* by the relevant community ministers responsible for vocational training.

- In addition, there is *individual training*. This is training organized for job-seekers with firms and technical schools by the VDAB and the FOREM in collaboration with undertakings for jobs for which the VDAB and the FOREM have no training on offer.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

The network of VDAB and the FOREM vocational training centres is also to be found in the secondary and tertiary sectors with a view to making up the shortfall in skilled personnel on the labour-market. The aim of the vocational training is to supply the labour-market in the short term with skilled labour (the economic aspect) and to increase trainees' chances on the labour-market by means of training and information (the social aspect).

Persons in employment and job-seekers qualify to take part in the abovementioned vocational training. The term 'job-seekers' covers unemployed people whether or not they are entitled to benefit and registered with an employment exchange. The duration of the training varies from a number of days to 30 weeks in the tertiary sector and from 14 days to a maximum of one to two years in the secondary sector, depending on the content of the course, the starting level and the trainee's objectives.

The two types of training programmes (training in the secondary or technical/industrial sector and training in the tertiary or services sector) are modular (training packages constituting coherent units of knowledge and occupational skills).

2.4.25
Vocational training in the tertiary sector has shown a sharp increase in popularity since the late 1960s. This vocational training prepares trainees for office and commercial jobs and encompasses modular and integrated training including the following elements: foreign languages, secretarial work, company administration, business management, office automation and information technology. This training embodies simulated business situations whose prime aim is to promote work attitudes. The successful formula used here is that of the simulated enterprise in which trainees perform different functions and work their way through the respective operations of a business.

2.4.26
The following table shows the number of training courses broken down by activity and by employees/job-seekers for the various training centres within the VDAB.

Number of training courses broken down by activity and by employees/job-seekers in the Flemish community in 1990 and 1991

	Employees			Job-seekers			Total			
	1991	1990	Difference	1991	1990	Difference	1991	1990	Difference absolute	%
A. VDAB centres										
Secondary sector	5 881	5 110	+ 771	8 293	7 974	+ 319	14 174	13 084	+ 1 090	+ 8.33
Tertiary sector	13 473	13 460	+ 13	6 672	6 887	– 215	20 145	20 347	– 202	– 0.99
Link- up training				2 488	2 204	+ 284	2 488	2 204	+ 284	+ 12.89
Introduction to information technology	6	23	– 17	1 627	2 470	–843	1 633	2 493	–860	–34.50
'Work Again' training				740	88	+ 652	740	88	+ 652	+ 740.91
Other specific projects				255	71	+ 184	255	71	+ 184	+ 259.15
Total	**19 360**	**18 593**	**+ 767**	**20 075**	**19 694**	**+ 381**	**39 435**	**38 287**	**+ 1 148**	**+ 3.00**
B. Centres set up with the collaboration of undertakings	266	663	– 397	177	273	– 96	443	936	– 493	– 52.67
C. Approved centres	2 902	2 570	+ 332	98		+ 98	3 000	2 570	+ 430	+ 16.73
D. Individual training centres										
undertakings				2 129	2 817	– 688	2 129	2 817	– 688	– 24.42
technical schools				82	173	– 91	82	173	– 91	– 52.60
Total A + B + C + D	**22 528**	**21 826**	**+ 702**	**22 561**	**22 957**	**– 396**	**45 089**	**44 783**	**+ 306**	**+ 0.68**

Source: VDAB, annual report, 1991

2.4.27

Training completed in 1990 and 1991 in the French community

	Employees 1991	1990	Difference	Job-seekers 1991	1990	Difference
A. FOREM centres						
Secondary sector	487	798	– 311	2 196	3 751	– 1 555
Tertiary sector	439	1 028	– 589	2 721	4 112	–1 391
Centres for reception and sociovocational guidance	54	80	– 26	2 684	3 206	– 522
Total	**980**	**1 906**	**– 926**	**7 601**	**11 069**	**–3 468**
B. Centres set up with the collaboration of undertakings	357	946	– 589	247	473	– 226
C. Approved centres	0	0	0	36	10	– 26
D. Individual training centres						
• undertakings				1 431	2 855	– 1 424
• technical schools				7	141	– 134
Total A + B + C + D	**1 337**	**2 852**	**– 1 515**	**9 322**	**14 548**	**– 5 278**

Source: FOREM, annual report, 1991.

In the case of the German-speaking community, the number of training courses commenced are concentrated in centres managed by the FOREM. In 1991, the number of training courses for the secondary sector came to 71 as against 92 in 1990, representing a decline of 23%. In contrast, in the tertiary sector the number of training courses came to 220 in 1991 as against 198 in 1990, a rise of 11%. The German-speaking community does not effect a breakdown between employees and jobseekers in view of the low numbers of participants (291 in 1990 and in 1991). However, for this small community the number of participants is remarkably the same for 1990 and 1991.

2.4.28

In 1991, unemployed course participants, who undertook training with the VDAB and then found work after six months, amounted to 6 179 or 74.5% in the case of the secondary sector and 4 871 or 73% in the case of the tertiary sector. There were no corresponding figures broken down for the tertiary and secondary sectors available at the FOREM This was due to the follow-up and processing of the statistical data.

2.4.29

Since 1978, weekday and Saturday courses have also been arranged in business management and information technology.

2.4.30
Both the FOREM and the VDAB have been active in combating long-term unemployment, often in conjunction with other institutions and firms.

2.4.31
In the course of its fight against long-term unemployment, the VDAB has developed a specific policy. In October 1987, it made a start by setting up job clubs to provide long-term unemployed persons with intensive training in seeking employment. A total of 18 job clubs were set up for the Flemish community with about 12 to 15 members. One job club was set up for each subregional employment service. After three weeks a new group is recruited.

Figures for job clubs

Year	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Total intake	477	1 874	1 630	1 509	1 733

In all, 55% of job-club members found work within two months and 70% within the year.

2.4.32
Since March 1987, the existing link-up training schemes* have been reserved for long-term unemployed persons of between 18 and 40 years of age. The link-up training provides long-term unemployed persons with vocational training courses which are directly related to employment. Every year this training can accommodate 3 800 long-term unemployed. About 70% of them find work afterwards or go into a higher form of training elsewhere. In autumn 1991, this training was integrated with preparatory training in the secondary sector and integration centres were set up in the tertiary sector for the long-term unemployed.

2.4.33
Since 1989, the VDAB has organized, in connection with the 0.18% and 0.25% contribution measure, genuine vocational training for long-term unemployed persons which is based on the direct and most specific needs of industrial sectors (wood, construction, foodstuffs, etc.). The training, which is organized at a VDAB training centre, is followed by a period in a sponsoring firm (or by alternating training). Employment is guaranteed after training. The course duration may take 140 hours and up to nine months. In May 1991, some 10 collaborative agreements were concluded with sectoral funds involving hundreds of long-term unemployed persons.

2.4.34
The VDAB and the Sectoral Social Fund together organize an awareness and information campaign directed at the long-term unemployed. Together they follow up and evaluate each regional training project and counsel trainees in their choice of a suitable job in the sponsoring firm and monitor trainees during their first months in employment. The VDAB

(i) recruits and selects candidates, but the Sectoral Fund generally wishes to be involved in the final selection;

* See glossary, Annex 4.

(ii) sees to the training and counselling of trainees; and
(iii) monitors trainees during their final period in the firm.

The Sectoral Fund encourages each firm to take on trainees who have completed their training. The Fund informs employees and increases their awareness with a view to encouraging them to become sponsoring firms. Where necessary, the Fund also provides external instructors or extra training facilities and technical retraining for VDAB instructors.

Vocational guidance for adults

2.4.35
Vocational training can also consist of observing the employee with a view to discovering his aptitude and working out the most favourable job guidance for him.

In 1976, observation and selection centres were set up under the auspices of the RVA/ONEM for aptitude testing through the performance of a number of basic operations for various occupations. At the FOREM, the observation and guidance centres were converted into centres for sociovocational initiation* with the aim, not only of bringing professional know-how up to scratch, but also of promoting reintegration into social life and the world of work. In 1989, the eight centres had 12 771 job-seekers in the case of the FOREM.

Since 1985, the guidance and observation centres in the Flemish community have been run down and the task of determining job-seekers' profiles in the light of their suitability for employment or training is carried out in the training centres themselves.

2.4.36
In 1989, a start was made on a multiannual plan, which is made up of three phases: the 'Weer-Werk' (Work Again) drive consisting of counselling long-term unemployed persons with a view to their finding stable employment; 1989 was the pilot phase, in which a start was made on an experimental basis in about four pilot areas. In all, 12 of the 18 STDs introduced the Work-Again scheme in 1990 (expansion phase). It was proposed that it would be introduced generally in 1991.

Weer-Werk developed because, on the one hand, there are a large number of employment openings which cannot, or are difficult to, be filled and, on the other hand, the labour-market is faced with a large group of long-term unemployed persons. At the end of October 1990, 3 731 took advantage of the Weer-Werk drive in Flanders; 60% of them were helped practically. In 1991, 10 000 long-term unemployed should have made use of Weer-Werk. In view of its good results, the Weer-Werk drive has been integrated into the existing VDAB structure and a coherent network of training measures has been set up as between the VDAB and third parties: local authorities, OCMWs/CPASs (public centres for social welfare), institutions from the socio-cultural sector, unemployment operations, etc.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

Training for the middle classes

2.4.37
In 1991, two institutes for continuing training for the middle classes were converted by decree from non-profit-making associations into public para-State and para-regional bodies. In the case of the Flemish community, the organization of training for the middle classes has been entrusted since the Decree of 23 January 1991 to the VIZO. Further, by the Decree of 3 July 1991, training for the middle classes in the French and German-speaking communities was put in the hands of the Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises.

Apart from the changes of name, the relevant Decrees also effect a structural change in training for the middle classes. This was needed for the purposes of adjustment in line with the 1988 constitutional reform. In addition to that structural reform, the Decree also gives the two institutes a solid legal basis, designed to simplify both the management and decision-making machinery. One of the most important aspects of the relevant Decrees was a change in the legal personality of the institutes, for continuing training for the middle classes, formerly non-profit-making associations which have now been converted into public institutions. Responsibility for implementing the rules in future will be transferred completely to the new institutions.

The new institutions will henceforth be able to approve courses, training contracts, etc. themselves. The Decrees confirm and strengthen the independence of the centres for training for the self-employed and small and medium-sized undertakings (SMUs), which continue to be non-profit-making organizations, operated and inspired by the local organizations for the self-employed and small and medium-sized undertakings and the trade associations.

The following types of training for the middle classes are available:

(i) apprenticeships (see 2.2.18);

(ii) business training;

(iii) continuing training (further training or retraining by means of lectures, study days and seminars);

(vi) retraining for another occupation; and

(v) as a result of the 1991 Decrees, both Dutch and French speakers have business counselling available to them.

Training for the middle classes is based on alternating training and the training of businessmen and workers in small and medium-sized undertakings with a maximum of 50 workers. The basic training comprises apprenticeships (already discussed in Section 2.2.18) and management training. Management training normally lasts two years and consists of 128 hours a year economic training and 128 hours a year technical business training. For some occupations, training lasts three years. Such training constitutes direct preparation for 'self-employed' occupation and/or the management of an SMU. It is accessible to anyone who has completed an apprenticeship or who has completed a certain preliminary training or has had occupational experience and satisfies certain age requirements.

In the French community, provision is made for a practical *stage* for trainees in order to prepare them for the management of an SMU and for business training.

In order to enhance the value of the relevant occupation and to keep up with new technological and economic and social developments, there is continuing training. It consists of further training, retraining and language courses. It is open to heads of undertakings and their employees and to persons who have successfully taken the basic training in business management. The possibility of retraining for another occupation also exists but no courses have been organized as yet.

Training for the middle classes also provides for appropriate trainer training for apprenticeship secretaries, heads of undertakings, trainers and business counsellors. In addition to training, the institutes for continuing training for the middle classes are now (since the relevant Decrees of 1991) also responsible for business counselling, the promotion of self-employed businesses in general and the promotion of art trades in particular.

More than 20 000 people attend management training with the VIZO and more than 50 000 self-employed entrepreneurs and employees of SMUs attend supplementary training courses of one kind or another at the VIZO every year. In 1989, approximately 4 865 people took management training courses in French and German-speaking communities.

Agricultural training

2.4.38
Training governed by rules relating to the instruction of persons employed in agriculture varies according to the type of course and according to the community concerned and is organized by agricultural centres and institutions.

2.4.39
As far as the special Law of 8 August 1980 is concerned, this type of training comes under the authority of the Minister for Agriculture. Ever since the special Law, this type of education, also, has been put under the authority of the communities. At present, this type of education comes under the authority of the various community executives.

In the Flemish and German-speaking communities, the former Royal Decree of 23 August 1974 has been kept in force, while, after the special Law of 8 August 1980, the French community took over the organization of this ongoing training and issued a Decree of its own on 10 July 1984 to govern this matter in place of the former Royal Decree.

From the substantive point of view, there is no difference between the old Royal Decree and the new Decree. There continue to be six types of training:

type A — comprises crash courses for persons who have had insufficient basic education;

type B — covers courses providing specific training to become established in certain types of occupation and deals with modern methods of organization and farming;

type C — consists of courses of periodic retraining for different types of occupation (technical and business management courses);

type D — consists of meetings, seminars and guided visits with a view to ensuring continuing training;

type E — consists of supplementary training days;

type F — covers training for staff who are to train and support production groups and cooperatives.

A and B training consists of 75 course hours, and C training of at least 20. Participants must not be under 18 years of age and must work in agriculture or in an allied sector. In 1988/89, there were 2 230 enrolments in the French community and 2 800 in the Flemish and German-speaking communities.

Other training

Training given in the armed forces

2.4.40
In the armed forces, training is provided in addition to training for trainee officer and trainee non-commissioned officers. Trainee officers attend instruction at the Royal Military Academy, which is an institution of higher education and trains officers in the defence of the country. The duration of these academic studies for trainee officers is five years in the polytechnical section (civil engineer) and four years in the general weapons section (equivalent to a licenciaat diploma).

There is also an academy for trainee non-commissioned officers. The training corresponds to general training at the level of higher secondary education. The Minister for Defence determines the programme, which is supplemented by physical and military training. Within the armed forces, other forms of training are also provided, such as language courses for officers and non-commissioned officers, training courses in connection with social advancement education with a view to promotion to a higher rank, elementary courses for conscripted servicemen who cannot read or write, etc.

Training provided for the staff of the ministries

2.4.41
Although it is not so well known, a number of ministries provide training for their own staff. The first ministry to provide such training was the Ministry of Finance, which organized, above all, courses of a specialist nature. In the early 1960s, a Department for Selection and Recruitment was set up within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This department is primarily directed towards the training of officials of level 3 ('clerk', equivalent to the diploma of lower secondary education), level 2 ('executive officer', equivalent to the diploma of higher secondary education) and level 1 (university degree).

Since a considerable number of subjects which were previously managed at the national level fall within the jurisdiction of the communities, the three communities also organize a training policy for their staff. In-house staff training by the ministries aims at motivating staff, especially at the lower levels, and encouraging them to take up promotion opportunities.

Training for disabled persons

2.4.42
Training for disabled persons, which until 1991 was subsidized by the National Fund for the Social Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, has now also fallen within the remit of the communities. In 1991, 2 934 disabled persons in Belgium were in vocational training, further training and retraining, namely school training, apprenticeships and VDAB/FOREM training in centres for the vocational training of disabled persons.

In-firm training

2.4.43
Firms undoubtedly play an important role in the training of their employees. Little data on this are available. It should also be pointed out that there is no general statutory obligation on firms as far as training is concerned. The study entitled 'The training efforts of undertakings in Belgium' commissioned by the Industry/University Foundation, nevertheless has the merit of casting some light on this area, even though its findings are based on answers from only 246 firms. A selection of the most important findings is set out below.

2.4.44
The average duration of training per employee comes to 4.5 days a year. In more than half the firms, only a maximum of 25% of the employees obtain any explicit training in a given year; in 13.4% of firms about 75% of the employees are given training. In small undertakings employing less than 100 workers, the training efforts are concentrated on a smaller percentage than in large undertakings. On average, management and executive staff receive more hours training a year than white- and blue-collar workers.

From the point of view of the content of the training, vocational/technical training can be regarded as the most important sector: it accounts for about 43% of the total days spent in training. Management training makes up 21.8% of the total. Language, information technology and commercial training each account for approximately 15% of the total days spent in training.

2.4.45
The higher trained the staff, the more investment is made in non-technical training, that is management, sales, languages, etc. Such training aims at supplementing existing knowledge, achieving a broader vision and the ability to adapt and adjust. The training for blue- and white-collar workers is mostly geared to the tasks which they have to carry out; in contrast, the training for executives and management staff is only linked to their functions to a relatively small degree. Training at the workplace is the most widely distributed form in the case of blue-collar workers and plays a central role in small and medium-sized undertakings.

2.4.46
The larger the undertaking, the less external training takes place. Training is carried out by the undertaking's own training staff. External training is most popular in the oil industry, the construction, wood and furniture industry, the chemical and plastics industry and industrial services industry. Firms from those sectors consequently have a small number of in-house trainers. The extent to which training is in-house or external also depends on the sociovocational level: executive and management staff tend to be trained outside the firm more often than blue- or white-collar workers.

2.4.47
The abovementioned study shows the infrequency of a well-formulated training policy or a clear training plan: 21% of firms (usually the larger ones) have a training centre in which training activities are conceived and put into effect.

2.4.48
Taking the training function as the parameter, the study shows that one third of undertakings have no training officer. In 30% of undertakings, the training function is only a part-time job; in 26% of undertakings, it accounts for one to two full-time jobs and in 8% for two or more full-time jobs. Only 30% of undertakings have a permanent trainer: in 6% of firms the training staff consists of five equivalent full-time jobs; 45% of undertakings rely on casual trainers. It is usually small and medium-sized undertakings which have no training staff.

Sectoral initiatives

2.4.49
A number of branches of industry have traditionally played an active part in training young people and/or adults either through the relevant federation or through a joint fund: the metalworking, construction and textile sectors. Under the stimulus of interoccupational agreements on the 0.18 and 0.25% contribution (see 3.5.14), sectoral initiatives have risen sharply in a number of branches which have switched to setting up jointly managed training centres which provide, encourage or coordinate training and appraise training needs and the training on offer.

Training by private institutions and local authorities

2.4.50
Alongside the training provided by the ministries, there is also training given by numerous non-profit-making associations and local authorities. In many cases, they are based on specific pedagogical know-how and directed at the weaker target groups on the labour-market: persons educated only to primary level, the long-term unemployed, immigrants, the illiterate, etc. Alongside subsidies from the communities, they also often qualify for aid from the European Social Fund.

Private institutions and industry, especially in the last decade, have been investing in their staff by providing them with numerous training courses organized by the firm itself or by authorized private institutions, which provide courses at the market price. The courses on offer cover management, information technology, languages, etc.

Distance learning

2.4.51
Distance learning is governed in Belgium by the Law of 5 March 1965. Following the 1982 constitutional reform, this type of learning has been transferred to the communities. In the case of the French community, distance learning is governed by a Decree of 1984. The Flemish community seeks to govern distance learning in the context of a wide-ranging Decree which is intended primarily to encourage social advancement education. This will probably no longer be termed social advancement education but adult part-time education.

2.4.52
Distance learning is intended, above all, for adults seeking to fill gaps in their education or preparing for the communities' Examination Board to take a diploma of primary or secondary education. In the latter case, the Distance Learning Board (Bestuur Afstandsonderwijs — BAO) acts as an administrative department responsible for the organization of the communities' education by correspondence.

CEDEFOP

Alongside its role of organizing correspondence courses in its capacity as the Examination Board of the Flemish and French communities, the BAO also prepares civil servants for examinations of the Vast Wervingsecretariaat (VWS)/Service permanent de recrutement de l'État (SPR) (Standing Recruitment Department of the State). Special further training and retraining courses are offered for teachers and parents.

2.4.53
The total number of students enrolled in distance learning in the Flemish community was in excess of 23 000 in 1989, which compares with more than 20 000 in the case of the French and German-speaking communities.

2.4.54
The private sector also has become involved in distance learning by setting up various 'schools' or centres in various cities in the country, their major specializations being languages and information technology.

2.4.55
In Flanders, distance learning has also been developed at the level of higher education. In 1985, the go-ahead was given by an agreement between the Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (VLIR) (Flemish Interuniversity Council) and the Netherlands Open University. This gives Flemish students the opportunity to follow courses of study available in the Netherlands with the support of six Flemish study centres. In 1987, the consortium of higher education was set up, in which not only universities are represented but also non-university institutions of higher education. Responsibility for coordination of the consortium lies with the Studiecentrum voor Open Hoger Onderwijs (St.OHO) (Study Centre for Higher Education), which is subsidized by the Flemish Executive. Pending the adoption of a Decree with regard to the further extension of Flemish open education, the St.OHO is ensuring continuity of the activities.

2.4.56
Open higher education aims at making higher education accessible to adults who, in view of their social and occupational activities, have need of flexible education. It is organized on the basis of:

(i) open admission;
(ii) multimedia self-study material;
(iii) flexibility of enrolment, instruction and examinations;
(iv) freedom as regards the time, place and pace of study;
(v) specially adapted study and course assistance;
(vi) modular course construction with a credit system;
(vii) broad spectrum of courses and training: law, economics, management and business sciences, technical and natural sciences, cultural and social sciences.

2.4.57
To date, approximately 2 000 Flemish students have taken part in open higher education of which 1 300 are still actively involved.

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. The role of the two sides of industry and other parties

3.1.1
Changing working methods, the economic crisis, the inertia of the education system and the absence of good communications between the education system and industry are factors which have resulted, among other things, in a sharp increase in the involvement of the two sides of industry over the last decades. The gap between the level of training, on the one hand, and finding suitably qualified staff, on the other, has compelled the government increasingly to involve the two sides of industry.

3.1.2
The collaboration between the public authorities and the two sides of industry takes place at various levels. The public authorities can seek advice from the two sides of industry directly; it can also set up advisory bodies on which the two sides of industry are represented. The initiative can also be put into the hands of the two sides of industry themselves, for instance, by giving them responsibility for setting up a training system. Lastly, the two sides of industry can also be involved in the preparation of draft legislation dealing with vocational education and training.

3.1.3
The two sides of industry play an institutionalized role at the national, regional and sectoral levels, the ultimate result of the collaboration between the public authorities and the two sides of industry being either a national interoccupational agreement or a regional interoccupational agreement, a sectoral agreement, a Royal Decree or a Ministerial Decree.

3.1.4
The functions which the two sides of industry perform in the area of vocational education and training involve:

(i) planning (identifying objectives, target groups and trends);

(ii) funding;

(iii) implementation (practical application, follow-up);

(vi) supervision and control (checking whether the objectives have been met and/or the procedures for implementation have been respected).

Despite the fact that these functions are closely interwoven, the utmost efforts will be made in this chapter to separate them systematically.

3.1.5

A Law of 24 May 1921 conferred on employers and employees the right to join together voluntarily in associations in order to defend their occupational rights. There are three major trade unions for employees in Belgium: the ACV (Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond)/CSC (Confédération du syndicat chrétien), the ABVV (Algemeen Belgische Vakvereniging)/FGTB (Fédération générale du travail belge) and the ACLVB (Algemene Centrale voor Liberale Vakverenigingen in België/CGSLB (Centrale générale du syndicat libéral en Belgique).

They defend their members' rights at the national, regional and interoccupational level and break down according to the regions, sectors and blue-collar or white-collar workers which they represent. The employers' association at national level is the Verbond von Belgische Ondernemingen (VBO)/Fédération des Entreprises belges (FEB) (Association of Belgian Undertakings), which acts as the umbrella organization for numerous federations of employers from particular sectors. Unlike the unions, they do not take part in labour negotiations on the basis of the various different ideologies.

The VBO/FEB's function as far as vocational education and training are concerned consists in persuading the various interest groups in internal discussions on committees to reach a joint position with regard to those aspects of vocational training which have remained national.

The Verbond van Kristelijke Werkgevers en Kaderleden (VKW)/Association chrétienne des dirigeants et cadres d'entreprise (ADIC) (Association of Christian Employers and Executive Staff) — a national employers' association — sets out to develop cooperation between the education system and trade and industry, on the grounds that industry's strength and its chances of survival depend on the quality of the education received by its workers. This employers' association of Christian inspiration is an advisory body and is also in favour of bringing social advancement education and industry closer together by working for appropriate education which is in keeping with the shifts on the labour-market. The VKW/ADIC Education Committee is conscious that education and training have such an important role to play, and, since 1987, has been working within the structure of the VKW/ADIC with the task of providing advice and guidance.

Small and medium-sized undertakings (SMUs) have their own organizations and structures for labour negotiations. The self-employed come under the Hoge Raad voor de Middenclassen (High Council for the Middle Classes), in which interoccupational federations (e.g. the National Christian Association of the Self-Employed — NCMV), and occupational federations (e.g. the Belgian Federation for Building and Public Works) are represented.

There is a strong representation of the middle classes on the VBO/FEB and they are represented on the Nationale Arbeidsraad (NAR)/Conseil national du travail (CNT) (National Labour Council). The self-employed are involved in central interoccupational negotiations. This is important in connection with vocational education and training, because they have their own independent training system.

3.1.6

The employers' organizations at the regional level are the Vlaams Economisch Verbond (VEV), the Walloon Union of Undertakings and the Brussels Association of Undertakings. They take part in labour negotiations.

3.2. Negotiating and consultative bodies

3.2.1

Labour negotiations between employers and employees take place on bodies specially set up for that purpose in which matters of common concern are discussed.

The consultative bodies (councils) can be classified according to two aspects: on the one hand, on the basis of the type of subject-matter dealt with (economic, social); on the other, on the basis of their area of jurisdiction (national, regional, sectoral or at the level of the undertaking). Thus, the Centrale Raad voor het Bedrijfsleven (CRB)/Confédération centrale de l'industrie (CCI) (Central Council for Trade and Industry) operates at the national level, the Sociaal Economische Raad van Vlaanderen (SERV — Flanders Economic and Social Council) and the Conseil régional économique wallon (CREW — Walloon Economic Council) at the regional economic level, the ondernemingsraden (ORs)/conseils d'entreprises (CEs) (enterprise councils) at the sectoral economic level and the works councils and comités voor veiligheid en gezondheid* (CVGs)/comités de securité, d'hygiène et d'embellissement des lieux de travail (CSHEs) (safety and health committees) at the enterprise level. At national level, the NAR/CNT deals with both aspects (subject-matter and area of jurisdiction) both on the economic and the enterprise level. The negotiating authorities for vocational education and training in Belgium are the NAR, the SERV and interested committees and works councils.*

Each of these bodies discusses, *inter alia*, problems relating to vocational education and training, and conclude agreements. The extent to which agreements are applied depends on the level of the advisory body. Agreements concluded at a lower level may be extended to include a higher level.

At various levels of labour negotiations (on the NAR/CNT; on joint committees; on temporary committees for a limited group, for a specific region or for a limited number of firms), a collective labour agreement (collective arbeidsovereenkomst (CAO)/convention collective de travail (CCT))* may be concluded. Any of the collective labour agreements concluded on the NAR or on joint committees or subcommittees may be declared binding by Royal Decree and published in the Belgian Official Gazette.

3.2.2

At the subregional level, there are the joint subregional employment committees* (STCs). An STC is not an employers' association. A Royal Decree of August 1988 provides that there must be one STC for each subregional employment service (STD). The STCs have autonomous powers in the field of research, advice and guidance with regard to employment issues and vocational training in their region. Their most important tasks are creating and encouraging cooperative associations between employers and employees; providing for consultative machinery between employers and employees, the education system and vocational training at the subregional level; and finally, establishing and stimulating cooperation between industry, education and research in the context of a policy of expansion and restructuring.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

3.3. The role of the two sides of industry with regard to enforceable and stimulation measures in the field of vocational education and training

Regulations and legislation

A — Enforceable measures

3.3.1
A number of statutory provisions are apt to have an effect on vocational training policy. Some of the measures are enforceable in the context of a firm's training policy; others constitute stimulating measures. The enforceability lies in the fact that, if the statutory provisions are not complied with, sanctions may be imposed by law or Royal Decree.

Paid educational leave (see 2.4.16)

In the case of paid educational leave (already discussed in 2.4.16) employers and employers' organizations are responsible for planning after consulting the enterprise council. Implementation and supervision by the public authorities are effected through social advancement education (OSP), joint bodies and other educational institutions.

3.3.2
Alongside paid educational leave, the stage des jeunes (Royal Decree No 230) is also an enforceable measure, but, as already mentioned (see 2.2.31), this is more in the nature of an employment measure and will therefore not be discussed in Chapter 3.

B — Stimulation measures

The Law on alternating training (Royal Decree No 495) (see 2.2.25)

3.3.3
The public authorities are responsible, *inter alia*, for planning, funding, implementation and supervision. Workers and workers' organizations are also involved in funding and implementation.

Workers and workers' organizations are also involved in planning (through the enterprise council; and in the case of collective recruitment the enterprise council must be consulted), implementation and supervision. Joint bodies are also involved in planning and supervision, while training bodies only have an impact on planning, implementation and supervision where they have responsibility for theoretical training.

Experimental part-time education (now part-time vocational secondary education) (see 2.2.17)

3.3.4
In this case, the public authorities are also responsible for planning, implementation, funding and supervision, but they are assisted by employers and employers' associations as regards planning, funding (pay) and implementation

(practice); by workers and workers' associations as regards planning, implementation and supervision; and in the case of projects of the European Social Fund (ESF), by joint bodies as regards planning, implementation and supervision (also as regards funding in the event that theoretical training is entrusted to them in the case of ESF projects). Training institutions are involved in all aspects where the theoretical training is entrusted to them. The ESF is also responsible for joint funding. The ESF-aided projects are measures in which part-time working and learning are a key element for young people of 16 to 18 years of age. Undertakings have been encouraged to take part in ESF projects by the offer of an injection of funds of BFR 85 000 per annum per student from the ESF.

The industrial apprenticeship system (see 2.2.21)

3.3.5

Pursuant to a national interoccupational agreement, joint bodies carry out the four functions (planning, supervision, funding and implementation) through the joint committee (paritair comité)* and the joint apprenticeship committee (paritair leer comité).* They are assisted in this by employers and employers' organizations (planning, funding (wages) and implementation), while workers and workers' organizations are also involved in planning and supervision. In addition to funding, the public authorities are also responsible (together with training institutions and the Department of Education) for implementation.

Apprenticeship for the middle classes (see 2.2.18)

3.3.6

The ministries of the Flemish and French communities are responsible, *inter alia*, for funding and supervision. The Institutes for continuing training for the middle classes (called the VIZO on the Flemish side) and/or the (autonomous) training centres are involved as regards the planning, implementation and supervision of theoretical general and technical vocational training. The VIZO acts as a public service with a management committee in which there are now workers' representatives, unlike in the case of the management bodies of the former non-profit-making associations. Supervision over practical in-firm training is carried out through the apprenticeship secretary. Employers follow the planning laid down by the institutions. They pay apprentices an apprenticeship allowance.

Further training for the middle classes (see 2.4.37)

3.3.7

As in the case of articles of apprenticeship for the middle classes, the ministries of the Flemish and French communities are responsible for funding and supervision. The Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises (Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-sized Undertakings) on the French side, the Vlaams Instituut voor Zelfstandig Ondernemen (Flemish Institute for Self-employed Businesses (VIZO)) on the Flemish side and the centres for training for the middle classes play the same role as in the case of articles of apprenticeship for the middle classes, namely planning, implementation and supervision. Planning is carried out primarily by the management boards of the institutions for the middle classes.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

VDAB and FOREM training courses (see 2.4.23)

3.3.8
As far as the training of workers in their own training centres is concerned, both the VDAB and the FOREM are responsible for carrying out the three functions: funding, implementation and supervision. The VDAB and the FOREM are administered by management committees having equal numbers of representatives of employers' and workers' representatives. The employers and employers' associations, together with the trade unions and the workers, take care of the planning of training (not necessarily VDAB and FOREM training) within their own firms. As regards as VDAB/FOREM training, both the VDAB and the FOREM have a say in that planning.

The public authorities are responsible for the funding of training (instructors) but it is carried out through the VDAB and the FOREM. This does not result in any duplication of funding on the part of employers and the public authorities. Employers and employers' associations also help to finance the training by paying the trainees' wages and making course material available.

3.3.9
In the case of individual vocational training for persons seeking employment in the undertaking, the VDAB and the FOREM also act as joint bodies responsible for funding (a training premium for the person taking the course and the instructor's salary) and supervision. The RVA/ONEM funds the unemployment benefit. The employers/employers' organizations and workers/workers' organizations are involved in the planning (provision of information) through the firm's enterprise council. The employers are responsible for implementation.

Both the employers and the workers/workers' organizations are responsible for planning.

3.3.10
Collective technical training of recruiting officers and employees in, or in collaboration with, the undertaking is concerned with collective updating of training or retraining unrelated to productivity; if productivity were involved, there would be more extensive involvement of the two sides of industry. The joint bodies, including the VDAB and the FOREM, carry out the planning (the VDAB and the FOREM in consultation with the undertaking), funding (subsidizing workers' and instructors' pay), implementation and supervision.

As regards any planning the firm might wish to carry out with the VDAB or the FOREM, the enterprise council or the Committee for Safety and Health and Attractiveness of the Workplace must be consulted by the workers/workers' organizations. However, the employers/employers' organizations are also involved in the planning.

3.4. The competent authorities with regard to the issue and the validity of diplomas and certificates in the field of further training

Social advancement education

3.4.1

The requirements to be satisfied in order to take an initial training course and have it officially recognized have already been described in Chapter 2.

Social advancement education (OSP) is organized and recognized by the Department of Education. In principle, social advancement education is reserved for persons who have already completed compulsory education. Courses may be taken at the level of secondary education and higher education. Since social advancement education has a restricted syllabus, the programmes of study and the diplomas awarded are not equivalent to those awarded after daytime study, although they are of the same kind. The diploma does not carry any entitlement to enter daytime education. Neither does the diploma afford automatic access to level 2 civil service examinations (junior executive officer).

The Decree of 16 April 1991 has brought about a change in this respect in the French community: diplomas awarded in social advancement education are recognized as equivalent to those awarded after daytime education. Through the introduction of training units enabling a switch to be made from one system to another, there is now harmony between the daytime and evening systems.

The legally recognized diploma awarded after the successful completion of social advancement courses has a social effect which should not be underestimated. The diploma guarantees access to specialized technical training at the level of non-university higher education (HOBU). Private institutions and firms value it highly and, at the same time, it opens a number of new prospects on the employment market for the person concerned.

Training for the middle classes

3.4.2

In principle, any occupation which may be practised by a self-employed person can be learned by means of this training. A number of occupations in Belgium are subject to the 'Vestigingswetgeving' (legislation on establishment). This means that a person cannot simply establish himself as a self-employed person as far as the occupations in question are concerned. In order to be able to carry on the occupation, proof must be provided that one has sufficient knowledge of the trade and business management.

As a rule, a diploma of higher education is not required in order to attend most business training courses. In the case of the business management course, people are required to have completed compulsory education or obtained the apprenticeship certificate.

In the case of the course in technical business knowledge, there are specific entry requirements relating to practical experience as regards certain occupations

(mainly in the welfare sector but above all in intellectual and service occupations) and higher entry requirements relating to preliminary training than a mere requirement to have completed compulsory education.

On passing the final management training examination, a diploma initialled by the responsible community minister is awarded. With this diploma, it is possible to set up as a self-employed person.

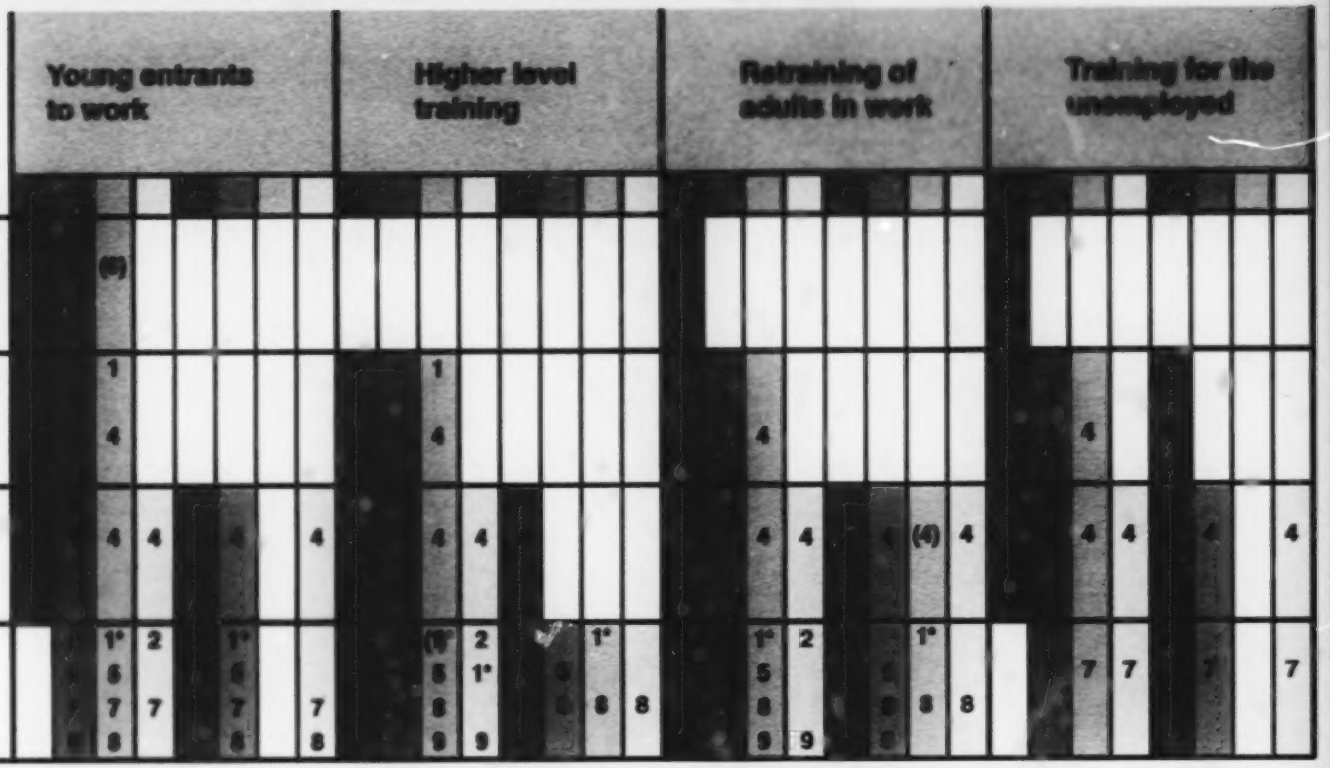
VDAB and FOREM vocational training

3.4.3

No strict requirements as to diplomas are laid down for admission to the various courses. In particular, persons who have sufficient professional experience or prior knowledge — which should be apparent from the selection tests — are eligible. The evaluation system applied by the VDAB or the FOREM is not comparable with the school examination system. There is continuing assessment per module or part of the course of how the participant is progressing.

After vocational training has been completed, the VDAB or the FOREM awards a certificate specifying the type of training or module(s) followed. This certificate is of value, above all, as evidence of occupational skills and for finding employment. Firms even take on new workers on the strength of such a certificate. They do not necessarily specify a particular level of education. A certificate from the VDAB or the FOREM is of no value in the educational system. It cannot be used to obtain admission to a particular course of study or in social advancement education (evening classes).

Responsible authorities – Belgium



1. Ministry of the Flemish community, education department – Ministry of Education, Research and Training of the French community
   * Higher institutions and universities
2. Psychomedical and social centres of the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities
3. Ministry of Employment and Labour
4. Flemish Office of Employment and Vocational Training (VDAB) – Community and Regional Office for Training and Employment (FOREM)
5. Training institutes for trades – Vlaams Instituut voor het zelfstandig Ondernemen (VIZO) – Institute for Continuing Training for Trades and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (IFPME)
6. Social partners:
   – at national level (joint apprenticeship committees, sectoral funds, national employment fund, study recognition commission);
   – at (sub)regional level (Flemish, French and German-speaking communities)
7. Local non-profit making training organizations
8. Company and institution training activities for their personnel
9. Commercial training organizations
10. Responsible administrations within the communities

Regulation of system
Determination of content
Assessment and certification
Information and guidance

Delivery:

in education institution or training centre only
alternance and day release
self study
in workplace only

Parentheses denote organization does not have a major role.

3.5. Funding

General

3.5.1
This section primarily sets out the principles of the funding of the various forms of training and vocational training in Belgium, because it is difficult to estimate expenditure relating to the organization of education and vocational training. Nevertheless, where figures are available, they tend to provide an overall view. On the other hand, to give excessively detailed figures for each category of training would tend to make the information cluttered.

3.5.2
The funding of vocational training, like the funding of training and education in general, is borne, *inter alia*, by the major funding authorities — the communities. Before the 1988 constitutional reform, the State allocated appropriations to the respective communities (Flemish, French, German-speaking) for the operation of the schools organized by the communities themselves and for the purpose of subsidizing eligible schools in the communities.

Since 1989, the communities have had full powers over education, including its funding. As part of the transfer of this competence from the national level to the communities, a special funding Law of 1989 allocated part of the proceeds (endowment fund) from value-added tax (VAT) to the communities.

Before 1989, the total education budget absorbed approximately 15% of the total national budget, which in 1989 was approximately BFR 294 billion or 5% of gross national product (GNP). Of this BFR 294 billion in appropriations, Dutch-language education accounted for BFR 160.5 billion while BFR 126.5 billion was earmarked for French-language education (including German-language education) and BFR 7 billion for the communities' cultural sector, that is the cultural section of the three communities together (such as the Royal Library). In 1985, the total education budget came to approximately BFR 293 billion, of which BFR 17.7 billion was earmarked for the communities' cultural sector, BFR 153.3 billion for Dutch-language education and BFR 122 billion for French- and German-language education.

3.5.3
If the overall education budget for both Dutch-language and French-language (and German-language) education is broken down according to the various levels of education, it will be seen that the percentage shares over five years remained roughly constant (see the following table).

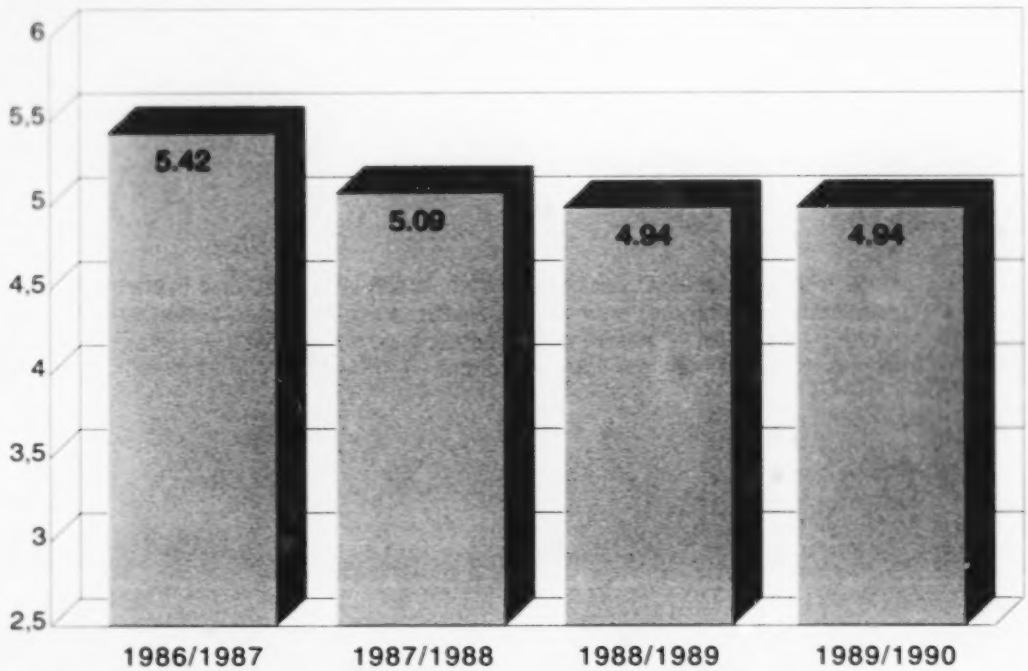
Education level	1985 %	1986 %	1987 %	1988 %	1989 %
Pre-school and primary education	24.17	24.80	25.04	25.02	25.06
Special education	5.67	5.35	5.43	5.41	5.47
Secondary education	47.48	46.31	46.18	46.37	46.23
Non-university higher education (HOBU)	5.79	5.92	6.18	6.24	6.14
University education and applied scientific research	11.04	11.91	12.10	12.00	12.06
Other (administration)	5.55	5.71.	5.07	4.96	5.04
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Education, Research and Training, *Le mouvement éducatif en Belgique, Brussels, 1990.*

A breakdown of the education budget for the various levels of education as provided in the above table cannot be given for 1990 and 1991 as there was no longer any central statistical service capable of providing precise overall budgets and data for the three communities of the kind needed for the table.

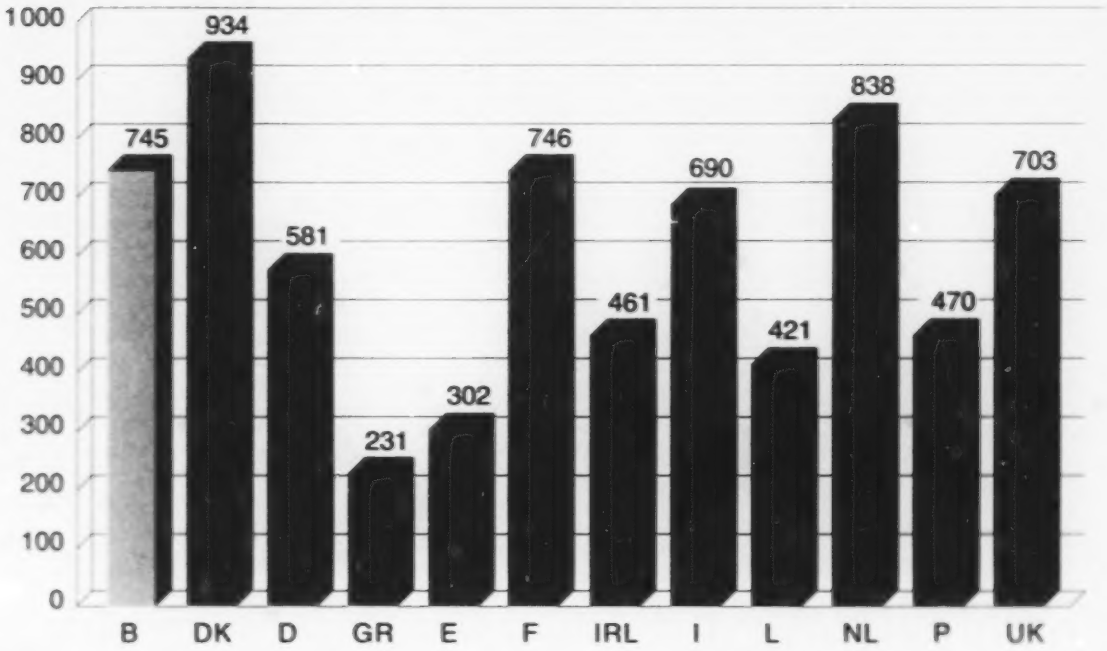
The OECD provided the following figures for public expenditure on education for 1986-87 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90 as a percentage of GNP.

Public expenditure on education – Belgium (% of GDP)



Source: OECD: *Education in OECD countries*, 1986/87 and 1987/88; *OECD in figures*, 1991, 1992 and 1993 editions.

Public expenditure on education in 1985 in purchasing power standard (PPS) per head of population



Source: Eurostat, *A social portrait of Europe*, 1991.

Social advancement education

3.5.4
Since 1989, social advancement education (OSP) has primarily been financed by the communities; before that it was funded by the national authorities. In order to cover operating costs, it receives operating allowances and appropriations from the Flemish and French community budgets and, on the Flemish side, enrolment fees from participants in courses are collected.

3.5.5
The Royal Decree of 5 January 1987 provided that, as from the 1987/88 school year, enrolment fees must be paid by participants. The enrolment fees vary from BFR 1 000 to BFR 2 000 depending on whether fewer or more than 240 lessons per year are attended. For the 1990/91 school year, a decision of the community Minister for Education raised enrolment fees for evening courses in the Flemish community to BFR 10 per lesson.

Subject to certain conditions, completely unemployed persons and persons at subsistence level pay no enrolment fees. For students who attend six hours' evening classes per week, the enrolment fee now works out at BFR 2 400 per academic year. A person who attends 12 hours' social advancement education per week will now pay BFR 4 800 per academic year. These student contributions help to finance the operation of social advancement education in the case of the

three education networks. In the case of the Flemish community, the operating funds provided by enrolment fees amounted to BFR 146 200 000 in 1988: BFR 32 700 000 in the case of community education (education provided by the Flemish community itself (see 2.2.7)), BFR 72 300 000 in the case of free education and BFR 41 200 000 in the case of official education.

3.5.6
In order to ensure equality between the three education networks (see 2.2.7), public funding is calculated per lesson and per student. The operating appropriations increase the public authorities' contribution towards the funding of the operation of social advancement education. In 1988, this amounted to BFR 126 700 000 in the case of the Flemish community: BFR 21 400 000 for community education, BFR 64 000 000 for free education and BFR 41 300 000 for official education.

The 1991 budget for social advancement education was estimated at BFR 5 596 800 000, covering 125 000 training places (the level of education being unspecified), or BFR 44 774 per training place.

3.5.7
A comparison with the French community would have been interesting, but the operating funds for social advancement education for the French community have not been made available.

Training for the middle classes

3.5.8
The fixed costs in the case of training for the middle classes cover operating and personal costs. The operating costs are funded by means of grants from the communities, namely operating grants including contributions from employers' organizations. These operating grants include fixed grants per activity unit. This corresponds to one hour's general knowledge in apprenticeship for the middle classes. The activity unit is adjusted by means of a coefficient depending on the form of training.

The operating costs are part-funded by participants in business training courses and by persons taking continuing training through the payment of enrolment fees.

The centres for training for the middle classes determine whether enrolment fees are to be collected. If enrolment fees are collected, they themselves determine the amount, since they are autonomous non-profit-making associations. The funding criteria are laid down by Ministerial Decree of 1979.

Alongside the operating costs, there are the staff costs. They are financed by fixed grants which are granted pro rata per duly enrolled course participant per academic year needed for the activities of basic training.

3.5.9
In 1988, the budget for training for the middle classes in the Flemish community amounted to BFR 1 115 600 000, which compares with BFR 1 221 300 000 in 1990; in the French community the corresponding amounts were BFR 689 300 000 (1988) and BFR 771 000 000 (1990); and in the German-speaking community the amounts were BFR 40 200 000 in both 1988 and 1990. The budget for training for the middle classes in the Flemish community for 1991 was estimated at BFR 1 466 500 000, or 71 300 training places or BFR 20 568 per training place.

The grants for running costs are about 10 times greater than the grants for institutional operating costs. The institutional costs cover staff expenditure for the VIZO and the Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises as well as the centres' own operating and organizational costs.

VDAB and FOREM vocational training

3.5.10
Expenditure of the VDAB and the FOREM is funded by means of a community grant* and from other vocational training subsidies. The FOREM's income consists of subsidies from the French community, from the Walloon and Brussels regions (employment measures) and from the European Social Fund (high-risk groups) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In addition to a grant from the Flemish community, the VDAB also receives other subsidies (aid or refunds).

Refunds	1989	1990	1991
ESF (BFR)	149 812 639	215 745 780	438 189 749
ECSC (BFR)		78 132 210	51 180 217
ERDF (BFR)	25 637 743	55 062 404	1 293 401

Source: VDAB, annual report, 1991.

The assistance granted to the FOREM by the European Social Fund would also have been willingly provided but repeated attempts to obtain figures produced no results. In its case, no assistance is received from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) or from the European Regional Development Fund.

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* See glossary, Annex 4.

In the case of the VDAB and the FOREM, there tends to be co-financing with sectors of industry pursuant to the interoccupational agreements between the two sides of industry under which it was agreed that 0.18% of aggregate wages and salaries was to be spent in 1989-90 and 0.25% in 1991-92 on training and employment for high-risk groups (long-term unemployed, unemployed persons with a low level of education, young people in part-time compulsory education and job-seekers wishing to return to the employment market after a period of inactivity) and also with trade unions.

The training premium for unemployed participants in training organized by the VDAB or the FOREM on their own account or in collaboration with third parties amounts at present to BFR 40 per hour (in the case of the VDAB and the FOREM). A training premium is a payment made by the competent institution (the VDAB or the FOREM) to unemployed course participants.

The VDAB premium for child-minding amounts to BFR 180 per half-day in the case of women with children under the age of three.

The actual budget expenditure of the VDAB in 1988 was distributed amongst the following items (BFR):

Centres set up and managed by the VDAB — vocational training	2 001 558 000
Centres set up with the collaboration of undertakings	75 759 000
Approved centres	28 010 000
Individual training	379 000
Total	**2 105 706 000**

3.5.11
In 1988, the Flemish community was involved in the funding of VDAB vocational training to the extent of BFR 1 830 million. These public funds had to cover both staff costs and operating, equipment and infrastructure costs.

In 1989, total expenditure came to BFR 2 294 262 000 and in 1990 to BFR 2 464 429 000.

The VDAB can also address specific education and training needs by means of collaborative agreements with third parties, namely associations for continuing education, actions for the unemployed and sociocultural organizations. By this means, appropriate training and an additional range of courses to those provided by the VDAB are made available. Accordingly, the VDAB subsidy for technical training amounts to BFR 262 per hour per student.

The VDAB subsidy for general training comes to a maximum of BFR 200 per hour per student. These subsidies cover staff and operating costs, a training premium for the student and his or her transport costs. In 1991, vocational training by the VDAB was estimated at BFR 2 971 400 000 (39 860 training places or approximately BFR 74 544 per training place).

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3.5.12
The French community, including the German-speaking community, participated in the funding of FOREM vocational training in 1988 to the extent of BFR 1 755.6 million.

Total receipts amounted to BFR 2 029 600 000 of which BFR 1 740 600 000 was earmarked for operating funds and BFR 289 000 000 for investment and infrastructure costs.

In 1988, budget expenditure for FOREM vocational training was distributed amongst the following items (BFR):

Centres set up and managed by the FOREM — vocational training	1 545 600 000
Centres set up with the collaboration of undertakings	126 000 000
Approved centres	5 000 000
Individual training	9 000 000
Total	**1 685 600 000**

3.5.13
In 1989, the subsidies of the French community for vocational training came to BFR 1 745.6 million. As from 1989, the German-speaking community has been separately subsidized for vocational training, in that year to the extent of BFR 56.733 million. These figures for the FOREM refer to the French and German-speaking communities.

In 1990, the French community's subsidies for vocational training came to BFR 1 931.3 million, while the German-speaking community received subsidies of BFR 66 million.

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Interoccupational agreements, 1989-90 and 1991-92

3.5.14
Under the 1989-90 and 1991-92 interoccupational agreements, the social partners agreed to spend a specific percentage of wages and salaries on the training of particular high-risk groups among workers.

Under the agreements, it was agreed that employers should put particular effort into training and integrating young people and job-seekers experiencing difficulty in finding employment: 'All employers obliged to pay social security contributions to the RSZ/ONSS shall contribute towards the funding of such measures by contributing to the (employment) fund 0.18% for the years 1989-90 and 0.25% for the years 1991-92'.

3.5.15
In the most recent agreement, the social partners declared that they were in favour of an overall approach, rather than fragmented measures, which should be directed especially towards young people, women, older workers, high-risk groups among the unemployed and handicapped persons. They therefore proposed an overall scheme encompassing the following measures:

1. The overall contribution for the training and employment of high-risk groups is to amount to 0.25%, of which 0.10% is to be earmarked for the most vulnerable categories of high-risk groups.
2. The drive is to take the practical form of sectoral or industrial agreements. The Ministry of Employment and Labour is to check that the 0.25 and 0.10% amounts are included in the agreements. In the absence of an overall effort, a commensurate contribution is to be paid into the employment fund. The contribution is to be collected by the RSZ/ONSS.
3. The drive may take the form of new or continued training and employment measures, such as those worked out for the implementation of the previous central agreement. In addition to the particular effort for the most vulnerable categories, training and employment measures for other high-risk groups may also be involved in the shape of positive measures for women, recycling measures for challenged older workers, etc.
4. To the extent of its finances, the employment fund is to support both collective projects in favour of high-risk groups and to assist with the individual employment of high-risk persons:

   Individual formulas — the fund is to pay for:

   - a reduction in wage costs on recruitment and employment in the case of the recruitment and employment of handicapped persons;
   - a temporary reduction in wage costs on the recruitment and employment of long-term unemployed persons and other categories of persons. The reduction is to be proportional to the period of time for which the person was unemployed.

Collective projects under collective labour agreements relating to a number of persons belonging to high-risk groups — the employment fund is to provide assistance to:

- projects exceeding the overall drive;
- projects based on sectors, undertakings and groups of undertakings which, in the absence of a collective labour agreement, have contributed to the fund;
- projects which provide for positive measures in favour of women and have financial implications. Such projects may be put forward by sectors and undertakings, where appropriate in collaboration with the VDAB, the BGDA and the FOREM and, in any event, with the agreement of the relevant trade union bodies.

5. The responsibility of the social partners in the existing employment fund is to be reinforced; in order for funds to be allocated, there must be a binding opinion of the social partners to that effect.

6. The fund is to commission an investigation into the implementation of this scheme each year.

7. Approval of the Minister for Employment and Labour for the proposed measures for high-risk groups, for vulnerable categories and for other measures — including measures under the 1989-90 and 1991-92 interoccupational agreements — which the employment fund may assist is an essential precondition for the overall agreement.

3.5.16

These national interoccupational agreements (of 18 November 1988 and 27 November 1990 respectively) were confirmed by the framework Laws of 30 December 1988 and 29 December 1990 respectively and by the Royal Decrees of 2 February 1989 (Belgian Official Gazette, 8.2.1989) and 12 April 1991 (Belgian Official Gazette 18.4.1991) respectively. These framework Laws and Royal Decrees together form the legal basis for a number of sectoral collective labour agreements which have been concluded.

Voluntary financial efforts by firms

3.5.17
A survey conducted by the Stichting Industrie-Universiteit (Industry/University Foundation) shows that Belgian undertakings put 1.4% of the aggregate wages and salaries they pay into training (employees' wages, course participants included). The highest financial participation is to be found in the information-technology sector (6%). The banking sector (3.5%) is in second place, followed by the insurance (2.3%) and oil sectors (2%).

After these come service undertakings with a share of 1.8%. The smallest financial effort comes from the woodworking and furniture sectors, the food industry, building, large distributors and the textile industry. A further finding is that the larger the firm, the more it puts into training. The high participation of firms from the information-technology sector is partly related to the fact that the firms provide in-service training to their customers.

Wage costs included, the firms devote an average of BFR 19 000 per annum per employee to training (the spread ranges from less than BFR 10 000 to BFR 298 000).

3.5.18
In all 44.6% of the undertakings surveyed state that they have a specific training budget. Consequently, more than a half of them do not have such a budget. The effort put into training is on an upward trend: two thirds of the undertakings state that their training budgets will increase in the next five years, even though their training budgets have already increased significantly over the last five years.

Paid educational leave

3.5.19
A fund exists for the financing of paid educational leave. Both the public authorities and employers are responsible for paying for paid educational leave. There are two different methods of funding it. On the one hand, the funding of vocational training is shared between the State and the employers. The employers' share is fixed at 0.04% of total wages and salaries. The State's contribution in 1990 worked out at BFR 525 million. As mentioned above (see 2.4.16), employers may recover their employees' wages and salaries, up to a ceiling per employee of approximately BFR 62 000 gross per month, from the fund for paid educational leave administered by the Ministry of Employment and Labour.

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3.5.20
In 1990, the employers' contribution came to BFR 632 million. As against the funding of vocational training, there is the funding of general training. This general training is funded completely by the State. In 1990, it worked out at BFR 105 million.

3.5.21
The total receipts of the fund for paid educational leave were expected to rise still further in 1991 and 1992. In 1991 the State's share was expected to rise to BFR 680 million (BFR 565 million for vocational training and BFR 115 million for general training).

The employers' share in respect of vocational training came to BFR 715 million. In 1992, the Ministry of Employment and Labour will pay BFR 880 million into the fund for paid educational leave (BFR 740 million for vocational training and BFR 140 million for general training).

The employers' share for vocational training will also amount to BFR 740 million in 1992. These increased receipts go hand in hand each year with greater expenditure on vocational training and general training under the heading of paid educational leave. The positive balance declines every year: at the end of 1990 it came to BFR 93 million; for 1991 it was still as high as BFR 8 million; and for 1992 it will only be BFR 3 million.

4.1. Divergent training systems

4.1.1
An attentive reader will have seen that the Belgian systems of vocational training form a complex whole. This is not due solely to the diversity of the actual training on offer (see the various forms of alternating training and the training agencies for training for adults). In addition, the constitutional reform and the resultant division of powers mean that it is less and less possible to speak of a Belgian training system. In fact, although a number of aspects have remained national, increasingly differences are emerging in the communities with regard to education and training policy, as a result of differing views, problems, priorities and influences.

4.1.2
The upshot of this is differing legislation (decrees) and other measures. The divergence of the training systems as a result of the differing policies of the communities raises the question of whether, when this monograph is updated, thought should be given, if not to separate monographs, to restructuring it in the light of the systems as they have developed for each community.

Argument for an intercommunity observatory for statistics on vocational training

4.1.3
The aforementioned complexity and diversity also mean that the information is very fragmented for various factors. This raises problems above all for statistical data. Some data are centralized at the national level, other data at the level of the communities. Often the data for the communities are not compatible. Some data are not available. Even within the communities it is often no easy matter to obtain a uniform overview of different training systems. In this respect there is clearly a need for an observatory to compile and process data with regard to flows of course participants and funds in vocational training in a uniform manner for the purposes of policy and investigation. In our view, the appropriate instrument for the purpose would seem to be the Steunpunt Werkgelegenheid — Arbeid — Vorming and its French counterpart the Point d'appui — travail — emploi — formation. The basic aim of these agencies, whose activities are coordinated by the national Diensten voor de Programmatie van het Wetenschapsbeleid (DPWB)/Services pour la programmation de la politique scientifique (SPPS) (Services for the Planning of Scientific Policy), is to develop the broadest possible range of services for research institutes, public institutions and the research departments of social organizations, such as employers' associations and trade unions, which are interested in the issues of work opportunities, employment and training.

One of their tasks is to design inquiry forms for the purposes of investigating supply and demand on the labour-market and thereby observe the development of a number of dynamic and specific aspects of the labour-market (persons coming onto and leaving the market, mobility, commuting, wage formation, rules on working hours, issues in connection with qualifications, selection and recruitment, retraining and further training).

In our view, in the context of that task a uniform inquiry form could be worked out in order to collect information about flows of course participants and funds which

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is relevant for policy purposes in respect of all training institutions and administrative authorities at all levels which have data available. Such an inquiry form should take account of the parameters applied by international institutions, such as the European Community (Eurostat), the OECD, etc. with a view to securing the cross-frontier compatibility of the data.

In the following sections, we have put forward a number of topics for which we could ascertain, with some caution, certain trends.

The role of public authorities and industry

4.1.4
Traditionally, the public authorities in Belgium have played a leading role in vocational training. This is undeniable in the case of initial training. With their extensive network of schools providing vocational and technical secondary education, the Departments of Education still serve the majority of young people.

4.1.5
Apprenticeships in the context of training for the middle classes and the recent forms of alternating training, together with industrial apprenticeships and the employment/training contract, where firms have the greatest responsibility for training young people, tend to be marginal from the quantitative point of view, that is in terms of the number of apprentices. However, it is not sufficient for the legislature to create the framework and the opportunities; all the parties concerned, including firms, have to give shape to these forms of training. For the time being, this is happening in some, but not in enough, sectors. In addition, the policy-makers, in this case the Ministers for Education, have consistently shown a preference for full-time compulsory education. When alternating training has been completed, it is not even recognized by the award of a fully equivalent certificate.

4.1.6
As far as training for adults is concerned, matters are better balanced. Firms bear the responsibility for the training of their workers in so far as the training serves the firms' aims. Firms have a choice from a range of instruments: an in-house training department; training by a sectoral training service; employees can be directed towards training offered in the private sector (consultants and the like) or in the public sector (the VDAB or a training centre for self-employed persons and small and medium-sized undertakings — two training agencies in which the business world is moreover very closely involved in determining the content of training and in managing the training establishments).

As from 1992, employers' responsibility has been given additional stress in the case of the VDAB and the FOREM, since from then on they have had to pay for the training of their employees.

4.1.7
With a view to the reintegration of high-risk groups into the employment market, a trend is laboriously emerging for firms to play a more active role. As a result of interoccupational agreements between employers and employees, the firms are making a financial contribution. There are, however, not many pioneers

introducing projects, and therefore most of the money remains in an employment fund for the time being. Nevertheless, in a number of sectors or parts of sectors, funds or training centres have been set up which collaborate with the VDAB or the FOREM with a view to the employment and training of the long-term and undereducated unemployed. They constitute a species of interface between the training on offer from the VDAB and the FOREM and possibilities for undertaking a *stage* or employment in the firms making up the relevant sector.

OECD investigation of the Belgian education system

4.1.8
At the request of the Ministers for Education of the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities, the OECD has investigated the Belgian education system. The findings were published in 1991. This investigation will perhaps form the basis for a number of changes in the future.

4.1.9
The OECD experts remarked on the cost of education. First of all, there is a relatively large number of teaching staff: in the 1987-88 school year, there was one teacher for every 16 children undergoing primary education and one teacher for every nine children in secondary education. About 87% of the education budget of the Flemish community and 89% of that of the French community is accounted for thereby. In addition, the Belgians pay a high price for freedom of education and free choice of schools; an ossified network of schools and access to a wide range of courses make for an inefficient education policy. There are too many small schools in secondary and higher education.

4.1.10
As against this high expenditure, there is inadequate efficiency. For every 10 pupils, one is failing to keep up with his or her classmates in the Flemish community at the end of primary education and three in the other communities. At the end of secondary education, the statistics show that 40% are behind in Flanders and 60% in the rest of the country.

4.1.11
In addition, secondary education is accused of being selective and segregating: if you cannot keep up, you have to 'drop down' from general secondary education via technical education to vocational education or even to part-time education.

4.1.12
Other weaknesses of Belgian education relate to the lack of investment in educational research and in monitoring, the failure to carry through educational reforms and the undervaluation of the technological side in the first year of secondary education. At the same time, it is argued that there should be a new profile for technical and vocational education and a reform of teacher training — part of the orientation effort must be done by the schools.

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4.1.13
At present, the Education Ministers are considering these findings and the measures which they may reasonably take, taking into account budgetary imperatives. Perhaps the first steps will be to increase the scale of school units, cautiously reduce teaching staff and reform teacher training.

The OECD's view of employment-market policy in Belgium

4.1.14
The number of persons in employment, as a percentage of the population of working age, is among the lowest in the Western industrialized countries. The OECD attributes this underutilization of human potential principally to a lack of balance between incentives and disincentives to work. In order to deal with this, Belgium should limit the time for which unemployment benefits are paid and taper them more so as to increase the incentive to work. Alongside more effective checks on unemployed persons' availability for work, active measures should be taken in the form of more training and placement programmes. Long-term unemployed persons and young persons should be obliged to take part in training programmes and to accept the jobs on offer.

4.1.15
In order to comply with these recommendations, politicians and the social partners should have the courage to take decisions and to look for creative solutions. There are undoubtedly still possibilities for less-gifted job-seekers to do meaningful work in firms and (local) public authorities (e.g. in the environmental sphere). In this connection, a sound balance should be sought between incentives and disincentives, both in the case of the unemployed and employers. The pressure to act is growing as a result of the increase in unemployment since September 1990. At the end of July 1992, Belgium had more than 400 000 people unemployed.

4.2. Teachers: the profession and teacher training

4.2.1

Compared with its position in the past, the teaching profession has suffered a considerable loss of social status. Social esteem and pay are usually determined by the duration of training. If the teaching profession is to be raised to the level of an executive job, the selection standards will have to be raised accordingly.

There are different schools of thought with regard to teacher training. Thus, it is argued, in particular, that in future the universities and the teacher training colleges — the latter being the institutions responsible for training primary school and lower secondary school teachers — should together be responsible for teacher training. The assumption is that responsibilities would be allocated as follows: the academic basic training would be left to the teacher training colleges. Two thirds of all teachers in secondary education have lower secondary teacher training of the short type. Under this proposal, teacher training might become training of the long type. Another school of thought proposes a single overlapping institution for the training of all teaching staff of all levels.

It is also proposed to make changes in the situation with regard to teaching practice in a particular occupational or technical sector. There are virtually no teachers to be found on the labour-market for practical subjects such as mechanics, electricity, woodwork, coach-building, gardening or plumbing. Three factors seem to be responsible for this: a lack of financial value put on the teaching profession, the burgeoning of industry and the extension of compulsory education.

These problems arise both on the Flemish and the French-speaking sides. The crisis in education has primarily to do with funding and with teachers' status. The trigger for the conflict in the French community was the absence of guarantees as to salaries and employment opportunities in the intersectoral negotiations of November 1989.

The politicians on the French-speaking side are pressing for radio and television licence fees to be transferred in full to the communities in order to offset the budgetary restrictions in the field of education.

Interoccupational organizations together with sectoral organizations are considering measures to tackle the problem of the status and revaluation of the teaching profession, taking into account the combating of unemployment and the shortage of adequate labour. One of the first tasks here is to go back to attaching greater value to technical and vocational education. Not only do too few pupils start technical and vocational education, but also, in the view of the VEV — Vlaams Economisch Verbond (Flemish Economic Union, an employers' association), the quality of the education provided is deteriorating.

Good training also requires first-rate teachers. High-quality education is given by competent motivated teachers, who, however, must be sufficiently numerous in order to revalue the teaching profession. This means that dedication and quality must be rewarded. Thus, according to the VEV, a *modus vivendi* must be found so that teachers may also work in trade and industry. A hybrid status of this kind will require the mutual respect of industry and education. At the same time, it will provide a solution to problems of follow-up training because the teacher will keep up to date with the latest techniques and products. Such hybrid status may also help to provide better pay, in so far as part of the teacher's remuneration will be paid by industry.

4.3. Choice of study by girls

4.3.1

Women are increasingly finding their way on to the various courses of study, yet, in contrast, long-term unemployment among women remains high. The idea that women have no industrial tradition is historically correct, but, for a long time now, this objection has had no substance. The knowledge and understanding accumulated through study must also be able to be applied in industry. In order for this to happen effectively, it is mainly necessary for there to be a change of mentality on the part of parents so as to allow girls to choose so-called traditional male occupations or trades with a future (vehicle assembly, electricity, painting, etc.). Henceforth, there should also be many more women on vocational and technical education courses. Praiseworthy experiments encouraged by Fabrimetal, the trade union federation for the metalworking sector, *inter alia* under the auspices of the European action programme, PETRA, and in the context of VDAB training courses show, moreover, that girls and women can certainly hold their own as far as training results are concerned. Their motivation, technical insight and skills are generally exemplary. It will probably take years before significant results are discernible in terms of numbers from the awareness campaigns conducted by the State Secretary for Social Emancipation, which are designed to ensure that girls exercise awareness when choosing their field of study.

4.4. Actions for the long-term unemployed

4.4.1

Through the various agencies involved in policy-making, attention is to be paid in the coming years to the long-term unemployed. In addition to, *inter alia*, the additional training premium of BFR 10 000 provided for since March 1991 in the budget of the Ministry of Employment and Labour for the long-term unemployed and the vigorous policy implemented by the Flemish community through the VDAB in the shape of the Weer-Werk (Work Again) drive, cooperation on training with sociocultural organizations and cooperation with sectors of trade and industry in connection with the 0.18 and 0.25 % measure for training, the State, the communities and the regions have worked together. In June 1991, a cooperative agreement was entered into between the State, the communities and the regions with regard to returning long-term unemployed persons to the labour-market. In this way, the parties to the agreement are committed to offering additional opportunities in the sphere of training to structurally unemployed persons and to stimulating the supply of jobs intended for the long-term unemployed.

In the Flemish community, the Weer-Werk (Work Again) scheme is to be extended to cover the whole of Flanders, with a budget of BFR 1 078 million to cover the introduction of 4 000 new training places for long-term unemployed persons or unemployed people with a low level of education and of approximately 1 500 new jobs under the Weer-Werk scheme.

4.4.2

The Walloon region is committed to releasing BFR 186 million in connection with the 'plus programme' for, among other things, the recruitment and training in industry of long-term unemployed people. The French community, in close cooperation with the European Community (EC), has approved an increase in funds for combating long-term unemployment from BFR 1 billion in 1989 to BFR 1.5 billion in 1993. It is intended by means of training/re-employment projects to extend existing FOREM industrial measures for high-risk groups by 1 200 places on vocational guidance courses.

The German community is significantly committed to extending the range of training on offer to job-seekers, thereby increasing their chances of finding employment, by means of cross-border cooperation with German training agencies.

The Brussels region released a budget for the recruitment of certain categories of job-seekers in 1991 which amounts to BFR 35.3 million with joint funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) of BFR 28.7 million.

4.5. Influence of European action programmes

4.5.1

Apart from the financial stimuli afforded by European funds, such as the ESF and the ERDF, for specific target groups of unemployed persons and for redevelopment areas* and assisted areas in Belgium, of which various training agencies take advantage, European policy has also had an impact in other respects on the development of vocational training.

For instance, within the VDAB and the FOREM, an International Relations Department has been set up in response to the emergence of a number of European action programmes on vocational training, such as FORCE, Eurotecnet, Lingua, IRIS, PHARE, Euroform, NOW, Horizon, etc. The aim of the VDAB and the FOREM is, on the one hand, to procure the maximum inflow of information and expertise from other Member States on vocational training into their own institutions and to obtain the available funds for this purpose from within the European Community. On the other hand, the two institutions wish to present themselves as worthwhile, expert partners in the field of further vocational training at EC level. Through the development of partnerships, they promote, either as project leaders or as regular partners, synergies with industrial companies, schools and other training institutions in Belgium and in other Member States of the European Community. The education departments, also, perform similar work.

Another important feature is the increase in the duration of economics higher education of the short type in the Flemish community from two to three years as from September 1990. In the case of technical and teacher training higher education of the short type, the transition from two to three years took place some years ago. This recent measure is designed to take advantage of the recently introduced EC scheme for the reciprocal recognition of diplomas awarded on the completion of vocational training courses of at least three years' duration.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

4.6. Higher education

4.6.1

The following trend can be discerned with regard to the choice of study after secondary education: more and more young people wish to go on to study further and are increasingly embarking upon courses of study of longer duration. Non-university higher education of the long type has enjoyed a spectacular rise in popularity in recent years, in that, despite the impact of the continuing decline in the birth rate, the number of first-year students in Flemish high schools has increased by a third in eight years. Over the same period, however, there has been a tendency for student numbers at the Flemish universities to stabilize and for student numbers in higher education of the short type (HOKT) in Flanders to decrease.

The one-third increase recorded over eight years in higher education of the long type (HOLT) is attributable to the rise in the number of female students (+ 141%). The market share of HOLT with its traditional four courses of study — industrial engineering, architecture, commercial sciences and translating/interpreting — rose in Flemish high schools over that eight-year period from less than 12% to almost 20%. There is therefore not only an increase in student numbers in higher education, but also Flemish young people are aiming higher. When the Flemish Government approves the most recent draft Decree of the Minister for Education, at the beginning of the 1991-92 academic year high schools will offer 10 courses of study in place of the four traditional disciplines.

Notwithstanding the fact that, according to representatives of HOLT, there is fundamentally no difference between a university and a high school, only a difference in orientation, the high schools do not have university status. The main complaint of HOLT representatives is that HOLT has less funds available to it than the universities.

This problem has been addressed by the draft Decree of 19 June 1991 on high schools. This draft Decree demarcates the sphere of the high schools, provides a general structure for the training they provide and gives them independence, responsibility and student involvement. It also deals with students moving from HOLT to the universities and with cooperation between the high schools and the universities. Lastly, it introduces a system of quality control.

The greater measure of independence, together with the fact that most high schools are already acting together through an association, namely the VHOLT (Vlaamse Hoge Scholen van het Lange Type — Flemish High Schools for Education of the Long Type), will probably, to a large extent, cut the high schools free from the 'education networks', as the universities already are. However, their independence is not yet wholly settled. It is intended that the funding arrangements — which have not yet been finalized will consist of a 'budget system' or even of funding per student. An official committee is to be set up for the relevant preparatory work. The committee is to examine, *inter alia*, whether it would be desirable to reduce the number of high schools. The Flemish Government is to use expert committees to carry out regular checks on the quality of the training. If a particular training course does not meet the requirements over a fairly long period, it will lose its subsidies.

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4.6.2

On 13 May 1992 in Flanders, the Flemish Government also approved a study points scheme, which has been introduced in university education. Through that scheme, the Flemish universities are now linked into the European ECTS system (European course credit transfer system). This governs the conditions for transferring examination marks and supplementing a year's programme of study by educational units from a subsequent annual programme. As a result of this system of study points, the former rigid academic examination system, whereby students had to obtain 12 out of 20 points for exemption from a subject after sitting the examination within the same academic year or at least 14 out of 20 points after the next academic year, has been reduced to 10 out of 20 points within the same academic year and 12 out of 20 points in the next academic year. This measure has been introduced partly in order to reduce the overall burden of studies. Each year of study must account for 60 points. One study point corresponds to 25 to 30 hours actual study. The overall burden of study is now limited to 1 500 to 1 800 hours per year.

4.6.3

Furthermore with regard to university education, the Executive has decided that a number of academic courses are to continue to be offered but by a university in Flanders. An academic committee (GIS-Flanders or geographical information system) is to provide advice on this.

4.7. Flemish community

Social advancement education

4.7.1
A new Decree on Flemish social advancement education is intended to redesign the overall services on offer. It is intended to lead to the award of diplomas, although it is also proposed to provide further training, retraining and specialist training. The training courses leading to the award of diplomas of the reformed part-time adult education system are to have the same objectives as normal daytime education so as to guarantee equivalence of diplomas. A certain selection has been made in this regard, while, at the same time, diplomas not available in daytime education will also be on offer. A strict watch will be kept on standards in retraining and specialization courses in order to keep the market value up to the mark.

4.7.2
As regards 'contract education' (contractonderwijs),* which has become popular in recent years — in other words, special updating training courses organized for employees by the adult education system at the request of a firm or an industrial sector — the public authorities do not contribute towards either the operating or the staff costs; merely the existing infrastructure is made available.

4.7.3
Part-time adult education is to cover not only social advancement education but also, among other things, distance learning. At present, social advancement education is primarily structured on the basis of school years. Part-time adult education is to evolve more towards a modular structure with credit units.

4.7.4
In addition, efforts are to be made to make only one institution responsible within a given region for planning and organization. It should conclude agreements on the implementation of the planning with specific schools and training establishments. Such regional institutions are to be responsible for providing an appropriate policy on recruitment of course participants and sound counselling with regard to the choice of study.

4.7.5
As far as training staff is concerned, it is intended to make room for a contingent of contractual staff members geared to the smooth build-up and run-down of training schemes. Teachers are to be obliged to undergo ongoing teacher training.

* See glossary, Annex 4.

CEDEFOP

Towards a coherent supply of education and training in the Flemish community?

4.7.6

In recent years, more and more voices are being raised in the Flemish community in favour of making policy on adult education and training and the supply of courses more coherent. The relevant powers are scattered over various departments and budgets within the Flemish community.

To date, however, the interdepartmental working party, which was to bring social advancement education, VDAB training courses, training for the middle classes and, possibly at a later date, 'second-chance' education and the projects for the underprivileged closer together with a view to coordinating adult education as a whole, has failed to get off the ground.

It is to be hoped that the standing working parties on education, training and the labour-market set up under the auspices of the subregional employment committees, which have, as one of their priority tasks, the job of compiling an inventory of the training on offer in their subregions in a data bank, constitute a step in the right direction. This should then lead to rationalization, whereby overlapping of the training on offer will be avoided and common use can be made of underutilized infrastructure and instructors. Moreover, the role of these working groups is closely connected with that of the SERV (Flanders Social and Economic Council), which is to carry out a forward-looking analysis of the labour-market. The information collected by the SERV and the recommendations which it makes should be translated into practical terms by the standing working groups as regards tailoring the available training to suit the needs of the labour-market. These working groups, which have an advisory and coordinating role, include representatives of education, the psychological, medical and social centres, small and medium-sized undertakings, training for the middle classes, the VDAB and other training agencies.

4.8. Training agencies in the French community

4.8.1
A faster pace of change is to be observed in the case of the three main agencies dealing with continuing training (training for the middle classes, social advancement education and FOREM training).

Training for the middle classes

4.8.2
For the time being, it is the Institut francophone de formation permanente des classes moyennes (French-speaking Institute for the Continuing Training of the Middle Classes) which has assumed a new legal and institutional identity. It is characterized by the political determination of the middle classes to implement a very broad decentralization of the organizational and financial management of the regional centres in which stress is laid on cooperative links with associations of self-employed persons and small and medium-sized undertakings. This shift of emphasis is clear in any event from the institute's new name, the Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises (Institute for Continuing Training for the Middle Classes and Small and Medium-sized Undertakings).

4.8.3
Even though this institute, with its new legal framework, is henceforward a semi-State institution, the emphasis is clearly placed on the accelerated development of training for heads of undertakings and further training activities, which have multiplied since 1989, while, recently, major quantitative developments are emerging with regard to the management of training time, thanks to better trainer training.

Social advancement education

4.8.4
Social advancement education, which is directed primarily at adults as a category of second-chance training, has been revamped and defined by a new Decree of June 1991 relating to education of type II. This offers, as far as diplomas are concerned, valuable new possibilities for moving on to education of type I (daytime education with a full curriculum). The decisions implementing this fundamental reform take effect in 1992 and 1993 and will certainly reinforce the development of training geared to employment.

FOREM training

4.8.5
The Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi is the traditional vocational training body. It has also undergone remarkable changes. Thus, vocational training, which hitherto was the exclusive responsibility of the competent ministry of the French Community Executive, is distributed between that ministry and the ministry of the Walloon region which has responsibility, *inter alia*, for employment.

4.8.6
This new political distribution of powers means that the FOREM's budget is funded to the extent of 40% by the Walloon region, which gives priority to the integration of long-term unemployed persons and to the development of the secondary sector.

4.8.7
In addition, the three-year management contract concluded between the national authorities, the regions and the communities has had to be renewed as from 1993, which should result in new aims. Consequently, the French community is in danger, as a result of new problems of a budgetary nature, of losing all or part of these powers, which entails implications for the future of job-seekers and workers.

Non-profit-making associations

4.8.8
Finally, there is the sector of non-profit-making associations. Their activities on the cultural and social level have been given a significant twist towards the integration of a series of high-risk groups in the employment market. This means that there is new competition for the three abovementioned training agencies with regard to job-seekers.

Conclusion

4.8.9
Although the manifold synergies between the abovementioned agencies, on the one hand, and firms and trade associations, on the other, are increasing, in the near future it is to be feared that the symbolic amount allocated for vocational training, namely approximately BFR 5 billion, will diminish further compared with community education, whose budget is 50 times greater, and will account for only a small share of the overall budget of the Belgian State.

ANNEXES

Annex 1

List of acronyms and abbreviated titles

AID	Actions intégrées de développement Integrated development activities
ARGO	Autonome Raad voor het Gemeenschapsonderwijs Autonomous Council for Community Education
ASBO	Aanvullend secundair beroepsonderwijs Supplementary secondary vocational education
ASO/ESG	Algemeen secundair onderwijs/Enseignement secondaire général General secondary education
BAO	Bestuur Afstandsonderwijs Distance Learning Board
BEV	Betaald educatief verlof Paid educational leave
BFR	Belgian francs
BGDA	Brusselse Gewestlijke Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddling Brussels Regional Placement Service
BSO	Beroepssecundair onderwijs Vocational secondary education
CAO/CCT	Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst/Convention collective de Travail Collective labour agreement
CEC	Centrale Examencommissie Central Examination Board
CMO	Centrum voor Middenstandsopleiding Centre for Training for the Middle Classes
EAP	Entreprises d'apprentissage professionnel Vocational training enterprises
EC	European Community
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
FOREM	Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment
GRABA	Gemeinschaftliches und regionales Amt für Berufsbildung und Arbeitsbeschaffung Community and Regional Office for Vocational Training and Employment

CEDEFOP

HIVA	Hoger Instituut van de Arbeid Higher Institute of Labour
HOBU	Hoger onderwijs buiten de universiteit Non-university higher education
HOKT	Hoger onderwijs van het korte type Higher education of the short type
HOLT	Hoger onderwijs van het lange type Higher education of the long type
KSO	Kunstsecundair onderwijs Secondary art education
NAR/CNT	Nationale Arbeidsraad/Conseil national du travail National Labour Council
NIS/INS	Nationaal Instituut voor Statistiek/Institut national de statistique National Statistical Institute
NUHO	Niet-universitair hoger onderwijs Non-university higher education
OCMW/CPAS	Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn/Centre public d'aide sociale Public Centre for Social Welfare
OR/CE	Ondernemingsraad/Conseil d'entreprise Enterprise council
OSP/EPS	Onderwijs voor sociale promotie/Enseignement de promotion sociale Social advancement education
PMS	Psycho medisch sociaal Psychological, medical, social
RSZ/ONSS	Rijkssociale Zekerheid/Office National de la Sécurité Sociale National Social Security Office
RVA/ONEM	Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening/Office National de l'Emploi National Employment Office
SERV	Sociaal Economische Raad van Vlaanderen Flanders Social and Economic Council
SMUs	Small and medium-sized undertakings
STC	Subregionaal tewerkstellingscomité Subregional employment committee
STD	Subregionale Tewerkstellingsdienst Subregional employment service

St.OHO	Studiecentrum voor Open Hoger Onderwijs Study Centre for Open Higher Education
TSO/EST	Technisch secundair onderwijs/Enseignement secondaire technique Technical secondary education
VBO/FEB	Verbond der Belgische Ondernemingen/Fédération des entreprises Belges Federation of Belgian Undertakings
VDAB	Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding Flemish Office for Placement and Vocational Training
VEV	Vlaams Economisch Verbond Flemish Economic Union — regional employers' association
VIZO	Vlaams Instituut voor Zelfstandig Ondernemen Flemish Institute for Self-employed Businesses
VKW/ADIC	Verbond van Kristelijke Werkgevers en Kaderleden/Association chrétienne des dirigeants et cadres d'entreprise Association of Christian Employers and Executive Staff
VLIR	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad Flemish Interuniversity Council
VSO	Vernieuwd secundair onderwijs Reformed secondary education
VWS/SPR	Vast Wervingssecretariaat/Service permanent de recrutement de l'État Standing Recruitment Secretariat
VZW/ASBL	Vereniging zonder winstoogmerk/association sans but lucratif Non-profit-making association

Annex 2

Major organizations involved in providing or regulating vocational training

FOREM
Boulevard de l'Empereur
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 510 20 11; Fax (32-2) 510 22 70

HIVA
E. Van Evenstraat 2c
B-3000 Leuven
Tel. (32-16) 28 33 17; Fax (32-16) 28 33 44

Institut de formation permanente pour les classes moyennes et les petites et moyennes entreprises
Avenue des Arts 39
B-1040 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 502 76 00; Fax (32-2) 502 66 97

Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap — Departement Onderwijs
Rue Royale
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 219 41 67; Fax (32-2) 219 34 25

Ministry of Education of the French (German-speaking) Community
Koningstraat 204
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 210 55 23; Fax (32-2) 210 55 38

Ministerie van Tewerkstelling en Arbeid
Belliardstraat 51
B-1040 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 233 41 11; Fax (32-2) 233 44 88

RVA
Keizerslaan 7
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 515 41 11; Fax (32-2) 514 11 06

VDAB
Keizerslaan 11
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 506 15 11; Fax (32-2) 511 45 43

VIZO
Bischoffsheimlaan 23
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 218 60 93; Fax (32-2) 217 46 12

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Annex 4

Glossary

The following brief list of terms and explanations on how they have been used in this monograph has been drawn up by the authors. It makes no claim to be an authoritative terminological work. In this context we would refer the reader to CEDEFOP's ongoing activities in the field of terminology and vocational training.

Aanvullend beroepssecundair onderwijs (supplementary secondary vocational education)
This is a more practically oriented alternative — for example in nursing, the clothing industry and the plastic arts — to higher education of the short type. Vocational education lasts for two or three years and leads to the award, not of a certificate, but of a licence (brevet).

A-lessen (dagschool) (A classes (day-school))
A classes for the day-school diploma relate to classes with a full syllabus. In addition, there are also day-schools for adults where the curriculum is derived from full-time education but provided in a more or less adapted form so that they can be attended by adults for specific times.

Beperkt leerplan (-onderwijs) (education with a limited curriculum (later known as social advancement education))
A curriculum setting out the aims, teaching content, forms of work and media for a series of educational activities, including the relevant periods of time, that is, during a school year the curriculum has to be carried out on a weekly basis for less than 28 hours a week.

B-lessen (avondschool) (B classes (evening classes))
This is a form of education or course whose curriculum is derived from that for full-time education and provided in a more or less adapted form so that adults with job or other commitments may attend classes in the evenings.

Beroepsvervolmaking (supplementary vocational training)
Training measures which aim at optimizing the occupational knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals.

Centrale Examencommissie (Central Examination Board)
A board made up of teachers from the various levels of education. Through this board it is possible to sit the examinations for the three academic years of lower secondary education. This also applies to higher secondary education. In the case of university education, the examination is for one academic year. The examination board was set up in order to enable pupils and students who are unable to pursue daytime education to obtain a diploma. The board therefore enables adults (pupils and students) to obtain, by sitting an examination, recognized certificates and diplomas which are equivalent to those granted to young persons after full-time education.

Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst (CAO)/convention collective de travail (CCT) (collective labour agreement)
An agreement concluded between one or more workers' organizations and one or more employers' associations laying down individual and collective relations between employees and employers in undertakings or in a branch of industry and governing the rights and obligations of the contracting parties.

Comité voor Veiligheid en Gezondheid (Safety and Health Committee)
The Committee for Safety and Health and Attractiveness of the Workplace is a consultative body as between the employer and the workers which has to be set up in all undertakings employing workers under a contract of employment where staff numbers total an average of at least 50. The chief task of the committee is to identify and put forward every means for actively contributing towards anything which will enable the work to be carried out under the best circumstances from the point of view of safety, hygiene and health.

Contractonderwijs (contract education)
Training for employees of undertakings which is provided by schools in the context of social advancement education on request in accordance with undertakings' needs.

Dotatie (community grant)
A grant which is distributed between the three communities in Belgium. It is distributed proportionately. Thus in the 1989 Finance Law (Law governing the funding of the communities and regions), it is provided that part of the revenue from value-added tax charged on all goods in Belgium is to be allocated to the communities on the basis of a particular distribution formula.

Erkenningscommissie, in het kader van betaald educatief verlof (BEV) (approval committee in connection with paid educational leave)
A joint committee of employers and workers set up by the Minister for Employment and Labour. This committee rules on the recognition of programmes of industrial training and the suspension of recognition of training schemes. It also supervises training and monitors government financial funds for paid educational leave. The committee also provides advice on its own initiative or at the request of the Minister for Employment and Labour in connection with issues concerning arrangements relating to paid educational leave.

Fonds voor Bestaanszekerheid (social welfare fund)
Joint apprenticeship committees (see under 'Paritair leercomité') may instruct social welfare funds to ensure that the education of apprentices is secured in the firms in their sector. In the absence of such a social welfare fund, the joint apprenticeship committee may designate a body, for instance a non-profit-making association, specially approved for this purpose.

Gecontroleerde leerverbintenis (supervised apprenticeship)
Articles or a contract of apprenticeship between a head of a firm who wishes to provide an apprentice with education and vocational training whereby the head of the firm, through the intermediary of an apprenticeship secretary, also exercises parental authority over the apprentice or acts as his or her guardian. In practice, such a supervised apprenticeship is concluded between the head of the firm and an apprenticeship secretary.

Gesubsidieerd vrij onderwijs (subsidized free education)
Education which is set up on private initiatives but for which the public authorities provide subsidies. It is provided mainly by free Catholic schools.

Grensarbeiders (cross-border workers)
Belgians who are employed in another country.

Helpers
Usually members of a self-employed person's family who assist him or her in his or her work without being remunerated in any way.

Hogeschool (high school)
Form of further education which may be started by young persons of 18 years of age or older (the end of compulsory full-time education) after completing higher secondary education. High schools cover non-university higher education.

Homologeerbaar getuigschrift (validatable certificate)
Certificates (written, official attestations certifying that a final examination has been passed) of lower secondary education and of higher intermediate studies and diplomas (synonymous with certificates) of higher secondary technical education which must be validated (approved) by the validation committee. Such a committee calls for all documents which will enable it to examine whether the level of study is based on an acceptable programme (basic programme of national education) and whether the student satisfies the legal requirements with regard to the duration of the studies and promotion to the next stage. All its members are teachers seconded from the various levels of the education system.

In the case of the Flemish community, the validation committee is to be abolished in 1993.

Industrieel leerlingwezen (industrial apprenticeship system)
A form of training for young persons of 16 to 21 years of age who, by means of a contract of apprenticeship concluded with an employer, undergo practical training in order to learn an occupation in remunerated employment in an undertaking and to acquire supplementary theoretical, and economic and social knowledge in a school or an approved training centre.

The industrial apprenticeship system was introduced for two reasons:

(i) in connection with the extension of compulsory education;

(ii) as a means of making the transition between education and work more flexible.

Interprofessioneel akkoord (interoccupational agreement)
An agreement concluded between the social partners and workers' organizations for all sectors in Belgium whereby it is agreed to apply a national social measure within all sectors or on all joint committees and subcommittees.

Kapitaliseerbare eenheden (credit units)
In order to increase accessibility to training and therefore also to diplomas and certificates, it was no longer desirable to organize adult education in the context of social advancement education according to the traditional yearly classes (class system) but according to a system of credit units within a modular system (lesson package system). This means that the same units (up to a certain level) may be used to obtain a 'supplementary' qualification in order to maintain skills already acquired. The lesson packages or modules form meaningful and coherent units of knowledge and occupational competence at a particular level. Such a module generally covers a semester and can be carried forward to a subsequent school year.

Kredieturen (credit hours)
Hours used to pursue a course of education or training without loss of earnings and without forfeiting entitlement to social security, etc.

Leerovereenkomst (apprenticeship)
An agreement of a determinate duration by virtue of which an apprentice pursues social, theoretical, personal and practical training under the leadership and supervision of a head of an undertaking.

Leersecretaris (apprenticeship secretary)
An independent office-holder who, in the context of the apprenticeship scheme for training for the middle classes, mediates between apprentices, parents, guardians and the sponsoring trainer in connection with the conclusion of articles of apprenticeship.

Middenstand (middle classes)
On-the-job vocational training given outside the school system for the sector of self-employed occupations (practical training, training in trade skills, commercial training and training for service occupations).

Nationale Arbeidsraad/Conseil national du travail (National Labour Council)
Official public institution set up on a joint basis and having advisory and mediatory duties nationally as regards matters of national concern. The National Labour Council (NAR/CRT) also provides the framework within which collective labour agreements may be concluded. For that purpose, only employers' and workers' representatives are entitled to vote.

Observatie- en Oriëntatiecentra (observation and guidance centres)
Centres which guide and counsel young people according to their interests and abilities with regard to the practice of particular occupations before they carry out vocational training proper.

Ondernemingsraad/conseil d'entreprise (enterprise council)
An advisory body as between employers and workers which has to be set up in all undertakings which habitually employ an average of at least 100 workers. This body provides advice with regard to measures which may affect the organization of the work, conditions of work and the efficiency of the undertaking with regard to matters of an economic nature.

Onderwijs voor sociale promotie (OSP) (social advancement education)
Evening and weekend courses for adults organized under the education system. These courses — termed 'leergangen' (courses of instruction) — are vocationally oriented or aimed at improving languages or at developing general education.

Onthaalcentra en centra voor beroepsoriëntatie en socio-professionele initiatie (French community: centres d'accueil, d'orientation et d'initiation socio-professionnelle) (reception centres and centres for vocational guidance and sociovocational initiatives) of de opvangcentra en centra voor sociaal-professionele oriëntatie (reception centres and socio-vocational guidance centres)
Centres created because of the economic crisis in order to encourage the (re)integration into the world of work above all of young unemployed persons who have been outside the working world for a long time by means of a reception stage in which the unemployed persons are given information, and a sociovocational guidance and information stage designed to enable them to discover their aptitudes. They enable young unemployed persons to experience the mechanisms of the economy and socio-occupational life, the requirements of the world of work and specific types of training. At the end of this process, participants draw up a training plan (see under Observatie- en Oriëntatiecentra).

Opleidingscentra voor nieuwe technologieën (training centres for new technology)
Training centres for new technology or 'techologiecentra' (technology centres) are special VDAB training centres which set out to train workers and job-seekers in the practical application of technological innovations in the various specialist fields. There are training units for office automation and information technology, microelectronics, new energy technology, CAD and CAM, computer-controlled and flexible manufacturing techniques, textile technology, information technology in the construction sector and the graphics sector, etc.

Paritair comité (joint committee)
A national committee which may be set up by the King either on his own initiative or at the request of one or more organizations. When a joint committee is set up (consisting of equal numbers of employers and workers nominated by representative employers' and workers' organizations from the relevant branch of industry), the King at the same time determines the persons and the branch of industry or undertaking which fall within its jurisdiction and its terms of reference. In addition to an advisory role, such a committee also has the task of forestalling or settling disputes between employers and workers and of bringing about collective agreements.

Paritair leercomité (joint apprenticeship committee)
Set up under the auspices of joint committees and the NAR/CNT (National Labour Council). Such a joint committee is national and made up of equal numbers of representatives of employers and workers. There are also four full members and four alternates representing the Minister for Education. The latter may vote except on questions relating to supplementary theoretical and general training. The joint apprenticeship committees have a comprehensive range of tasks, including that of drawing up a model training programme for each occupation, determining the duration of articles of apprenticeship etc.

Reconversiezones (redevelopment areas)
Areas which were formerly highly industrially developed but have lost their economic function as a result of the closure of businesses and have been designated by the public authorities as areas whose economic function needs reviving.

Schakelopleidingen (link-up training schemes)
Obtaining and increasing the understanding, skills and motivation of job-seekers who have completed primary education in order to enhance the possibilities of their 'linking up' to various vocational training schemes and/or to a job.

Stageovereenkomst (*stages* contract)
Written part-time employment contract between a *stagiaire* and an employer which complies virtually entirely with the implementing rules of the Law on contracts of employment (Law of 3 July 1978, Belgian Official Gazette, 22.8.1978). Such a contract provides for a training period for the *stagiaire* which is primarily intended to provide him or her with experience as a link between the education which he or she has had and his or her intended employment.

Subregionaal tewerkstellingscomité (STC) (subregional employment committee)
A joint advisory/consultative body consisting of:

(i) representatives of employers' and workers' organizations represented on the Social and Economic Council of Flanders (Sociaal Economische Raad voor Vlaanderen (SERV);

(ii) representatives of the community ministers responsible for employment policy, vocational training, the economy and education and of the managers of the subregional employment services falling within the jurisdiction of the committee.

The committee's geographical jurisdiction covers the area of the subregional employment services (STDs) which come under it. Exceptions to this rule in Flanders are the employment services for Antwerp and Boom, which together form the committee for Antwerp, and the Hasselt and Tongres employment services, which together constitute the Limburg committee. As a result, Flanders has 18 subregional employment services and 16 subregional employment committees. In the case of the French community, the number of subregional employment services and the number of subregional employment committees coincide. (See the map of Belgium divided into subregional employment services.)

This consultative and advisory body has manifold tasks. The first series of tasks are designed to guide policy (including advice with regard to the scope of vocational training and policy on work opportunities). The second category of tasks is specifically related to the VDAB and the FOREM (including the provision of advice with regard to requests to organize in-firm training). The third series of tasks covers the implementation of programmes for absorbing unemployment.

Voortgezette beroepsopleiding (further vocational training)
Vocational training by way of continuation of initial vocational training by which it is sought to complete one's training or bring it up to date.

Vrij onderwijs (free education)
Education set up on private initiatives, chiefly consisting of free Catholic schools.

Werkraden (works councils)
Specially constituted negotiating bodies wich look into all types of matters which may arise. Such a group also has powers of negotiation on account of its work in investigating a particular matter.

CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Vocational education and training in Belgium

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